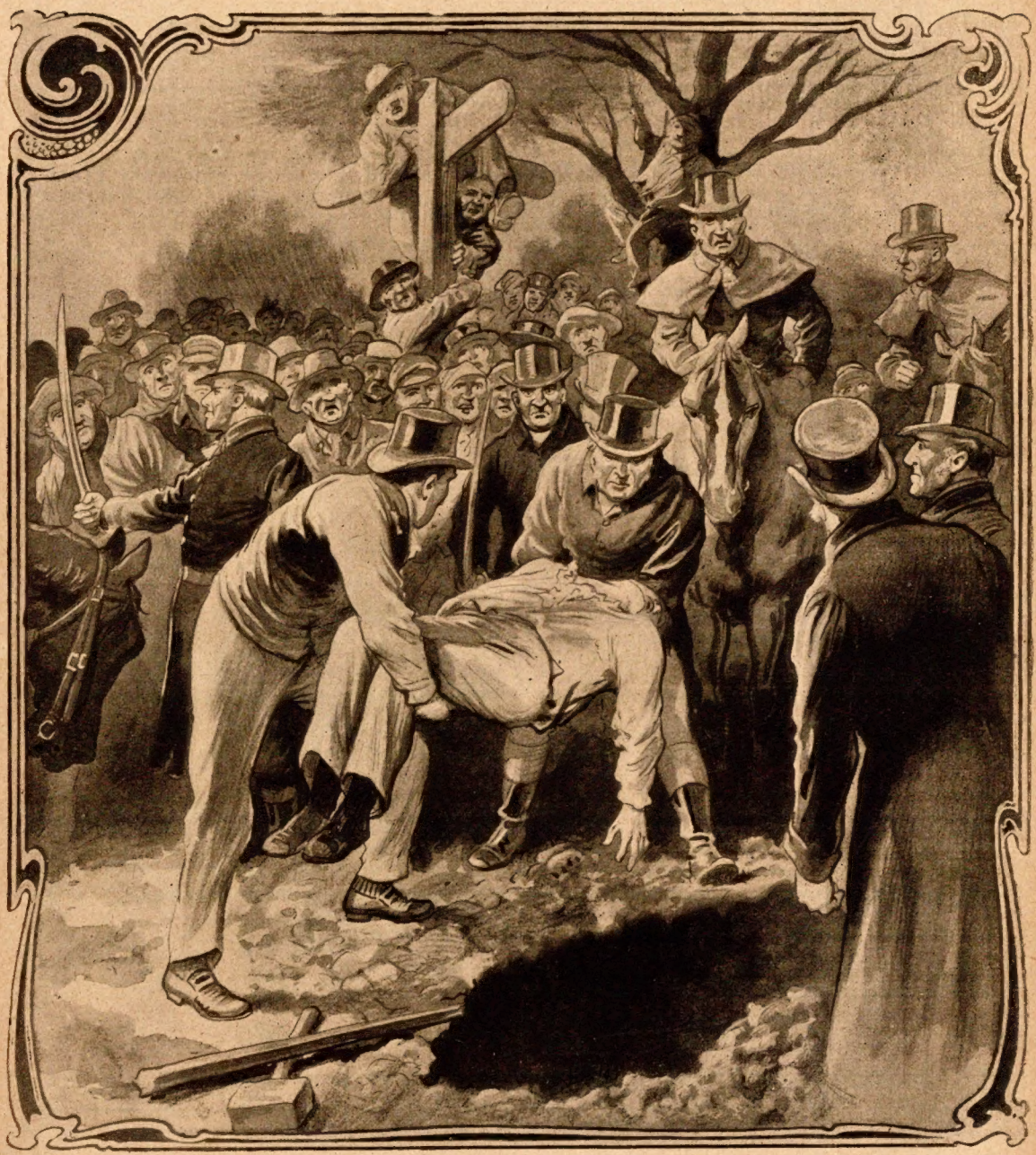
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



THE BURIAL OF WILLIAMS AT THE CROSS ROADS.

Vol. V.—No. 61.

THE RATCLIFF HIGHWAY HORRORS.

A Full, True, and Particular Account of the Series of Frightful Murders Perpetrated in the East End of London in 1811, and of the Subsequent Arrest, Examination, Suicide, and Weird Burial of the Supposed Murderer, one John Williams.

"Go, hie thee, hie thee, from this slaughter-house,
Lest thou increase the number of the dead.
. . . . A cockatrice hast been hatched to the world,
Whose unavoided eye is murderous,"

—SHAKESPEARE, "Richard III.," Act IV., Scene 1.

PART II.

A FULL and accurate description of the blood-bespattered maul having appeared in all the London newspapers of the period, it was not long before some information came to hand with regard to that instrument, and it may be said at once that it led to the apprehension of John Williams on suspicion of being concerned in these atrocities. His arrest was followed by the procuration of so much strong circumstantial evidence against him as completely to establish his guilt, though his culpability, owing to his suicide, was never legally proved by a jury's verdict. His self-inflicted death, indeed, destroyed any doubt that might have lingered in some over-cautious mind. An innocent man charged with murder would never, under any circumstances, take his own life, and, apart from the almost convincing evidence of this man's guilt, his suicide while under remand sufficiently establishes the fact that his hands were dyed with the blood of the Marrs and Williamsons and their servants.

Some writers do not hesitate to assert that he had accomplices, but I consider that the facts point to his having done his fearful work alone and unassisted. It will be remembered that the witness Turner saw only one man on that fearful night, and after Williams's death nothing was ever discovered to indicate that others were concerned in the barbarous deeds which his cunning planned and his hardihood carried out. No, on mature reflection I am with De Quincey in giving all the credit, or discredit, to the diabolical Williams alone!

This libel on human nature is believed to have been an Irishman, and was about twenty-eight years of age. Amongst other reports concerning him, it was said that he had been a sailor, and that he had once sailed in the same ship as poor Marr. Rumour credited him with having quarrelled with the latter while at sea, and attempted to make out that the murders of that family were prompted by motives of revenge. Williams was about five feet nine inches in height, not lame, as was reported, and of well-set-up figure. His features were comely and regular, and his mass of curly yellow hair rather attractive than otherwise. De Quincey records, on the testimony of one who was present at his first examination, that his appearance was marred by his eyes, which were covered with a sort of film, which gave them a lack-lustre and fish-like appearance. On the same evidence he describes him as ghastly pale, and his hair as of a colour resembling the bright yellow of an orange. A painting of his head and shoulders to be seen in the Horror Chamber at Madame Tussaud's—the face is seen in profile—by an eminent artist, gives him a far from unpleasing appearance, and the features

Had been seen hanging about there.

are positively good. That he had good manners, and a most pleasant and insinuating address, is quite certain, and he seems to have been well liked by those who knew him. He had a passion for smart clothes, and the long surtout in which he did the murders was lined with satin. Previous to the crimes, he had worn long, sandy whiskers, but in the

police office he appeared clean-shaven, and evidence was given that he had recently had them cut off.

He was a man of irregular habits, and at the time of his apprehension had no employment. Suspicion attached to him under the following circumstances.

It was known that he was a regular caller at Williamson's house, and he had been seen hanging about there at seven o'clock on the evening of the murder, nor did he return to his lodging at the Pear Tree public-house in Sir William Warren's Square until very late on that particular night. A fellow-lodger, a foreign seaman, was sitting up reading in bed, and Williams, on his return, very surlily requested him to put out the candle. On the evening preceding the last murders, he had borrowed sixpence from his landlady, but when he was taken into custody he had a good deal of silver, and on his person was found a pawnbroker's duplicate for two pairs of shoes pledged for 8s., £1 14s. in silver, and a one-pound note. The magistrates ordered the publication of the marks on the note, for the purpose that any person having had such a note or who could at all trace the private marks, might come forward and supply every information thereon.

One.
Bank of England, 1811.
No. 16,755. Pay to Mr. Henry Hase, No. 16,755.
on demand, the sum of One Pound.
269.
—— Goodwin.

One.
1811, Aug. 23, London, 23 Aug., 1811.
For the Gov. and Comp.
£One
of the Bank of England.
T. Froggatt.

And indorsed on the back of the note:

Golding to J. D.——7.12.11.

To account for these suspicious circumstances, Williams admitted that he had been at the King's Arms on the Thursday evening, and at various other times. He added that he knew Mr. and Mrs. Williamson very well, was quite intimate there, and that on Thursday evening when he was talking to the old lady she was very cheerful, and that she patted his cheek when she brought him some liquor. He gave an account of his subsequent movements, the truth of which does not appear to have been ascertained, and he explained that his only motive for desiring his bedroom companion to put out his candle was a fear of fire. For the money in his possession he accounted by describing it as the proceeds of certain pledging operations, and after this statement he was remanded for further examination.

In the meanwhile, a Mr. Vermilloe, at whose house the prisoner lodged, declared that he could give some information respecting the much-advertised maul. Accordingly, that weapon was taken by the magistrate to Newgate, where Vermilloe was then confined for some trifling offence, and was immediately identified by him as one of a quantity of tools which had been left in his custody by one John Peterson, who was by trade a ship's carpenter, and was now at sea. That Williams had access to these tools was certain, and as a weapon exactly like this one was missing from Mr. Vermilloe's house, it was fair to assume that it had been borrowed for the purpose of destroying life by the murderer.

It may be wondered why the man John Turner did not at once come forward and identify the prisoner if he were indeed the midnight assassin he had seen at work; but when, at Williams's next examination, the former gave his evidence, he was unable to positively swear that he was the man he had seen. It will be remembered, however, that he had not seen the murderer's face, and though Williams was known to him as a customer at the King's Arms, he could not swear to him by his figure and the long coat alone. He stated that while going downstairs he heard a man slowly walking in the sitting-room, and that his shoes creaked. This was at least curious, for a new pair of shoes worn by the prisoner creaked just in the same manner, and it may be stated here that the prisoner was left-handed!

Mrs. Rice, a laundress, residing in Union Street, Shadwell, stated that she was sister-in-law to Mrs. Vermilloe, and that she had washed for the prisoner off and on for about three years, and knew his stock of linen, which was of good quality, perfectly well, although he had sent her nothing for the last fortnight. The magistrate rigidly examined this witness as follows:

Question: "Have you not seen blood on his shirts?"

Answer: "Yes, I have; on one of them."

Q.: "Have you seen any blood on his shirts since last Saturday week?"

A.: "Yes, I have; one of his shirts was bloody about the collar, like the mark of two fingers."

Q.: "Was there no other part stained?"

Washed them in the back-yard.

A.: "I took no particular notice; the shirt was torn at the breast."

Q.: "Will you swear there were no other marks of blood?"

A.: "There was a little blood on the arms, and several spots on parts of the body of the shirt. I kept it in order to mend it."

Q.: "What linen have you generally washed for the prisoner?"

A.: "Four linen shirts and some stockings; but never any white handkerchiefs; he used to wear black handkerchiefs." (The prisoner wore a white handkerchief on this examination, and it was the one with which he ultimately hanged himself.)

Mrs. Vermilloe, the landlady of the Pear Tree, stated that she had known the prisoner for some time. There were two or three mauls in the chest of tools left with her husband by John Peterson, a Swede, who had gone abroad, and as the chest was never locked, anyone could handle or remove the weapons. Mrs. Rice said her two little boys used to play with a broken-pointed maul which was at their aunt's (Mrs. Vermilloe) house, and as she thought they would know the weapon again, these boys were sent for. In the absence of the messenger, the prisoner said that he

wished to explain how his shirt came to be torn and stained. At the Royal Oak Tavern he had been roughly handled by some Irish coalheavers, and had had a scuffle with one who tore his shirt-collar and struck him a blow on the mouth, which cut his lip, and the blood from the wound stained his shirt. This was afterwards disproved by Miss Lawrence, daughter of the landlord of the Royal Oak, who said that she remembered Williams coming half-tipsy to the house, and there being some rough horse-play between him and some Irishmen, but she denied that any fighting took place, or that Williams's lip was cut in any manner at all. This occurred on a Friday, but the shirt had been found blood-stained the day before, and when this was pointed out to the prisoner, he said no more, but displayed some confusion.

Two fellow-lodgers—Prussian sailors—of Williams's proved that the latter did not come home till close on one o'clock on the night that the Marrs were murdered, and that he undressed and went to bed in the dark. William Rice, a boy about eleven years of age, now arrived at the police office, and directly his attention was called to the maul he brought before the magistrates. He had lodged in the same house as Williams for about twelve weeks, but asserted that he knew little about him, except as a fellow-lodger. A pair of blue trousers had been found under this man's bed in a damp state, and still bearing the traces of mud, this being the only circumstance of suspicion that could be alleged against him, and he declared that he had never washed the trousers, and did not know how any mud could have got on them. He went on to state that it was nearly half-past one when Williams returned on the night of Marr's murder, and the next day he went, from curiosity, to examine the bodies, but he did not tell Williams on his return where he had been. He said the maul resembled one he had seen at the Pear Tree, but he could not swear to it, and, indeed, he gave his evidence with much apparent reluctance. He added, however, with a queer glance at Williams, that he had heard a captain of a vessel with whom the former had sailed say that if ever he, Williams, went on shore again he would certainly be hanged. This Dane was soon discharged.

A Mrs. Hoare, who kept a chandler's shop next door to

"YES; IF I AM ABLE TO COME!"

recognised it as the same he had frequently played with, though he had not seen it for some three weeks before then. The prisoner was then again remanded, and on the following Wednesday the magistrates went again to Newgate, and Mr. Vermilloe positively identified the ripping-chisel found at Marr's house as one of Peterson's tools.

At a further examination of the prisoner—against whom the case now began to look very black—John Cuthperson, who also stayed at the Pear Tree, gave evidence. The substance of his statement was that on the morning after the last murders he saw a pair of his own stockings lying behind his chest, very much dirtied with fresh mud. He suspected Williams had used them, and asked that person if he had soiled his stockings in that fashion. "Why?" said Williams, "are they yours?" Some little argument then arose as to the rightful ownership, and ultimately Williams washed them in the back-yard and returned them to the witness. He added that the prisoner had recently been wearing a pair of light shoes which creaked a good deal!

About this time, John Frederick Richterson, a Dane, was believed to be an accomplice of Williams, and he was the Pear Tree, deposed that on the Saturday before the first murders, about half-past one in the morning, she heard a noise as if someone was attempting to break into the house, and, being frightened, she asked who was there. A voice, which she recognised as that of the prisoner, answered, "I am a robber," but she had no fear of him, and replied, "Whether you are a robber or not, I will let you in, and am glad to see you." Williams then entered, and proceeded to ask many questions as to how many rooms there were in her house, and the situation of her back premises, from which it may be surmised that he purposed one of his pleasant little night excursions in this direction. A chisel—stolen from Peterson's chest—was picked up by the watchman outside her window, and Williams remarked, "Whoever owned this chisel never intended you any good." One cannot doubt that he had dropped the chisel himself, and that but for his arrest Mrs. Hoare would have been his next victim.

Williams was then again remanded, and the magistrate, addressing him, said, "You will be brought up again on Friday next." It is recorded that the prisoner gave a ghastly smile, and said, "Yes, if I am able to come."

On the Friday following an immense number of persons assembled at the Shadwell Police Office for the purpose of witnessing the further examination of or getting a glimpse at the ruffian, whose guilt was now questioned by none. While all were waiting in anxious expectation the arrival of the prisoner from Coldbath Fields Prison, the officers who had been despatched to bring him before the magistrates returned with the intelligence that they had found him hanging to a cross-bar six feet from the ground and extending along the ceiling, placed for the accommodation of prisoners to hang their clothes on. He was suspended to the bar by his white neckerchief, tied tightly round his neck; his body was quite cold, and he had apparently struggled hard. It is related that his face wore a cadaverous grin, as though in grim exultation at the thought of cheating the official gallows and of improvising a little execution of his own!

Though the man was dead, every scrap of information that could throw light upon the murders was eagerly collected, and the various witnesses were closely examined as to their knowledge of the suicide and his line of conduct.

Mrs. Hoare related how the suicide-murderer used to visit her very often, nursing her young child and chaffing her daughter.

"Would you be frightened," he asked the latter once, "if you woke up one night and saw me standing by your bedside?" And the girl replied in all innocence, "No, if it were you, Mr. Williams, I should not."

But other people felt less confidence in this extraordinary man, who seems to have inspired the utmost distrust and dislike in some people, and the greatest liking in others. Thus a Mr. Lawrence, landlord of the Royal Oak public-house, informed the magistrates that he had several times requested Williams to keep away from his place, and Miss Lawrence, his daughter, had also objected to the familiarity with which he used to come into the house and sit in the bar. Mrs. Vermilloe related that on one occasion she had called him Williams to one of his friends, and the latter remarked that his name was John Murphy, not Williams, and that he was a native of Bandon, in Ireland. The first time she saw him was on the return from abroad of the "Dover Castle," East Indiaman, when he came home on that vessel and took up his lodging in her house. Afterwards he went on a voyage in the "Roxburgh Castle," and had been home about twelve weeks when the Marrs were murdered. She never had any suspicion that the man was concerned in the atrocities until the maul and some stockings of his, mud and blood-stained, were produced, and then she was afraid to turn him out of the house, as, if he guessed she suspected him, he might, she thought, have murdered her. He was a man of the most insinuating manners, she said, and made remarkably free wherever he went, entering into any and every conversation, and forcing his talk upon perfect strangers. If ever reference was made to the murders in his presence, he would walk into the passage, as if the subject of conversation was one he wished to avoid. She added that the only person who called on her respecting Williams after his arrest was a man named Fowler, who said he would "soon be cleared."

John Harrison, a sailmaker, and a fellow-lodger of the defunct Williams, also gave evidence, and stated that he had seen Williams in company with a carpenter named Hart, who, by the way, had been engaged on some work in Mr. Marr's house shortly before the murders. On the morning after the first tragedy he told Williams what had happened—that all Marr's family had been killed—and the former replied, "I know it." As he had not been out that morning, and, indeed, was still in bed, it is difficult to see how he could have learnt the news unless he had overheard Harrison telling Mrs. Vermilloe. The witness said he seemed to suspect Williams from the first; at any rate, since finding the muddy stockings behind his bed, and he remembered that he had told the witness that he knew Mr. Marr well. One day, as he and Williams were walking in the City, the latter said that he believed that Mr. Marr had money to a considerable amount.

After the murders, he said that he had often tried to search Williams's clothes for some marks of blood, but he was always baffled in these attempts, for whenever he attempted to approach the suspected man's bed he seemed to suddenly waken. He was very restless, and much agitated at night, his sleep disturbed, and the witness often heard him talking in his sleep. One night, since the murders, he heard him say, "Five shillings in my pocket; my pocket's full of silver," and he did not reply when he (Harrison) called out to him.

Mr. Lee, of the Black Horse Tavern, also related some more or less amiable peculiarities of this "grand monarque" of murder. He stated that he had seen Williams push against his wife and shake her pocket, as if to ascertain whether she carried any money, and on one occasion he caught him with his hand in the till, when Williams explained that he only wanted to get a halfpenny.

Harrison, the sailmaker, underwent a second examination in reference to a new French knife he had seen in the possession of Williams; it had a white ivory handle and a narrow blade. The witness, after the latter's arrest,

He was suspended to the bar.

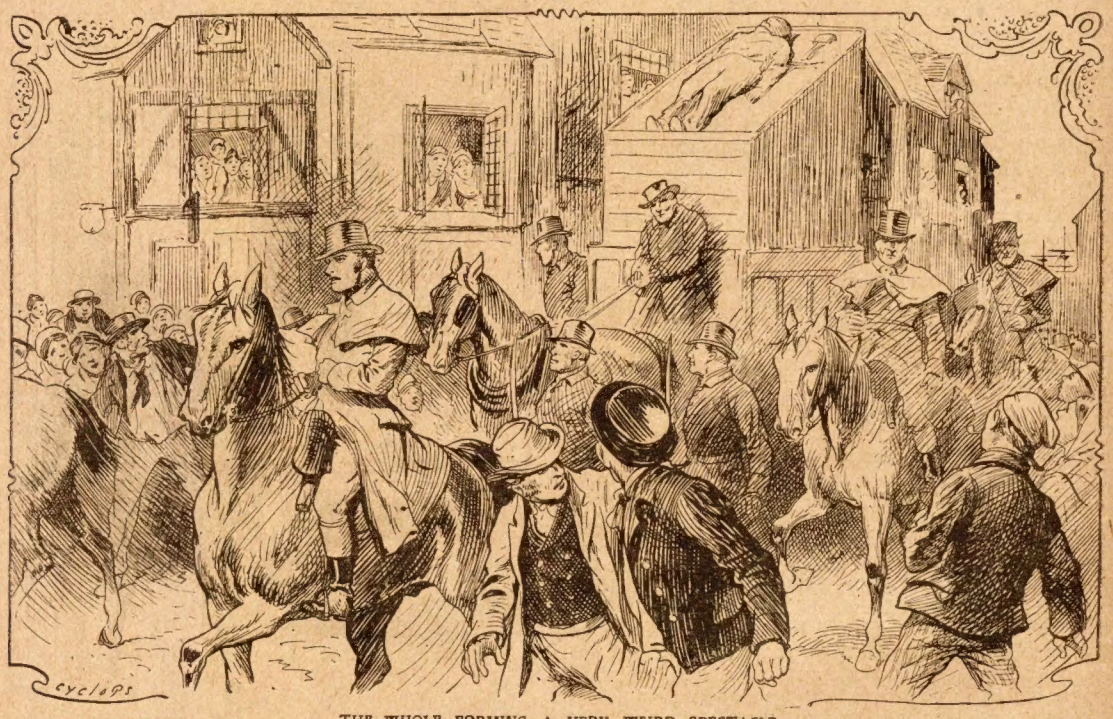
searched every part of the Pear Tree with a view to finding this knife, with which, in spite of Mr. Salter's opinion that the throat-cutting had been done with a razor, there can be now no doubt Williams had made sure of the deaths of his victims. At last, the necessary at the back of Mrs. Vermilloe's house was emptied, and rigidly examined, and herein an old pair of blue trousers was found; but it was not until January 12, 1812, that the knife was found. On that day Harrison, in searching amongst some old clothes, found a blue jacket, which he immediately recognised as having belonged to Williams. The inside pocket was quite stiff with coagulated blood, as if a blood-stained hand had been thrust into it, and, without a doubt, this had been worn by the murderer when engaged on his deadly work. It was handed to the Shadwell police authorities, who at once sent down two officers to make further search in the house. In about an hour and a-half the searchers came to a small closet, in one corner of which there was a heap of dirty stockings and other garments, and, on these being removed, they observed a mouse-hole in the wall, from which a piece of wood was protruding. This they drew out, and they then discovered the identical

French knife, which was absolutely encrusted with blood, and which Williams had doubtless hidden after the murders.

Meanwhile, at a coroner's inquest on the suicide, the jury brought in a verdict of felo-de-se, and it was arranged that the burial of the body should take place publicly, at four cross roads, with every possible mark of ignominy, to show the general detestation of the monster's crimes.

At ten o'clock on the night of Monday, December 30, 1811, Mr. Robinson, the High Constable of St. George's, and several other high officials, went to the prison of Coldbath Fields, and demanded the body. Being delivered to them, it was placed in a hackney-coach, and driven to the watch-house of St. George's known by the name of the Roundabout, at the bottom of Ship Alley in Ratcliff Highway. There the remains were deposited for the night, and on Tuesday morning, the 31st, they were placed on a platform, erected six feet above a very high cart, drawn by one horse. The platform was composed of rough deals fastened together, raised considerably at the head, and thus the corpse was elevated, the face being turned towards the horse. The body wore a clean white shirt, open at the neck, and neatly frilled; the hair was combed, and the face had been recently washed. The countenance, it is said, looked healthful and ruddy; but the hands and the lower part of the arms were of a deep purple, and nearly black—presumably the results of strangulation. The lower part of the body was covered with a pair of clean blue trousers—the villain had affected blue attire—and brown worsted stockings, but his shoes had been removed. On his right leg he still wore a heavy iron, the fatal maul was placed by the right side of his head and the ripping-chisel or crowbar on the other side, the whole forming a very weird spectacle. About ten o'clock the procession, attended by the Head Constable and many other authorities on horseback, and about three hundred extra constables, with drawn cutlasses, began to move, and at a very slow pace approached the house of the late Mr. Marr, where it stopped for half an hour. By the motion of the cart, Williams's face had been turned to the side, looking away from the house; but someone ascended the platform and placed the face in a position facing the scene of the first murders. The procession presently wound its way down Old Gravel Lane by Wapping Wall, and at last came to the King's Arms, where again it remained stationary for a quarter of an hour. It then proceeded to Cannon Street, and, on reaching the top, where the New Road crossed and the Cannon Street Road began, it stopped again. A large hole had been dug in the ground at this spot, and after a dramatic pause of ten minutes, the wretch's body was thrown into this unhallowed grave, amidst the acclamations of an enormous crowd.

A stake was now produced, and with the maul driven through the body, in accordance with the old rule regarding self-murderers, and then the grave was rapidly filled with quicklime, and all was over. The actual burial was conducted in almost a complete silence, the solemnity of the occasion and the fearful nature of the dead man's offences appearing to awe and subdue even an East-end multitude. The huge crowds then dispersed in the most orderly way, and the maul and crowbar were taken back to the Shadwell Police Office, and are in the possession of the authorities and to be seen to this day.



THE WHOLE FORMING A VERY WEIRD SPECTACLE.

John Williams was buried close to the turnpike-gate in the Cannon Street Road. In the year 1849 certain alterations and incidental road-mending had to be done in that vicinity, and at that exact spot a skeleton, with a stake driven through it, was unearthed by those engaged on the work in question. The "find" caused a great deal of comment at the time, and revived interest in the fearful murders of thirty-eight years previously; for the authorities caused it to be announced that the skeleton was that of the notorious malefactor, John Williams.

Whether or no the latter had accomplices will never be known, and must always remain a question. The witness Turner saw and heard only one man, and all the weapons with which the deeds were done—the maul, the knife, and the crowbar—were traced to Williams and to Williams alone. No one else was ever after arrested on suspicion of having been concerned with him, and no one ever came forward to volunteer any fresh information. The public mind was satisfied that the prime mover at least had been accounted for, and the minds of men became easy again.

THE STORY OF

Luigi Baranelli,

. . . the ITALIAN.

"With murder in his soul he sought the house,
Discharged the pistol, and the victim died;
Then stern Remorse his conscience seemed to rouse,
Too late! Too late! His crime he could not hide."
—PORTER, "Remorse."

IN the present day, when science has advanced to such a remarkable eminence in every branch, and more especially in medical inquiry, it is more than probable that the life of Luigi Baranelli would have been spared on the ground of insanity. That his crime was a deliberate and premeditated one there could be no gainsaying, but a perfect "cloud of witnesses" testified to his delusions and his melancholy. Nevertheless, he was hanged, and people thought no more about him. He was a foreigner, and fifty years ago the English thought less of foreigners than in our own time. A short while before, too, a double murder of a very fearful character had been committed by a foreigner, and the public mind was prejudiced

That Italians are revengeful as a nation is an undoubted fact. Their whole history proves it, and we must admit the impeachment. Crimes of violence are more rife in Italy than in any other country of Europe for which statistics can be obtained, and insanity also is very frequent among the population. The great Italian criminologist, Lombroso, has inquired into multitudes of cases, and has given it as his opinion that latent insanity has been the exciting cause of most of the crimes into which he has probed. In the instance of Baranelli our readers will see that the criminal's mind was decidedly abnormal, and, as has been said, if the man had been put on trial in these days he would, most probably, have been sent to Broadmoor as a lunatic.

The facts of the case were these:

Luigi Baranelli was a tailor by trade, who had worked for a person named William Eagleton, at Penshurst, in Kent. Previous to that he had been valet and butler to Mr. John Crawford, a Scottish gentleman, residing in Grafton Street, Bond Street, where the valet's behaviour was such as to make him a universal favourite. While he was in service there his first wife, an Italian like himself, died, and the poor fellow was overwhelmed with grief. His was a most emotional nature, and for days he was quite inconsolable, weeping constantly, and exhibiting an exaggerated sorrow. According to the evidence of one witness, a fellow-servant in Mr. Crawford's employment, his conduct after the death of his wife was completely changed, and on one occasion he was heard to threaten to take his own life. This outrageous grief was more noticeable on Fridays, the day of the week upon which his wife had died.

This profound sorrow, however, must have worn itself out somewhat rapidly, for the following year, while working for the Penshurst tailor, he married again, this time to a Kentish girl belonging to the town where he was engaged. For a time all was happiness in the Italian's little home. His mercurial temperament rose with the sun of affection, but only for a brief space. The young wife died in giving birth to a child, and Baranelli was again plunged into the lowest depths of affliction. His master spoke of him as a sober, quiet, inoffensive man, who became terribly depressed after his second loss, often remarking that he would soon die, and that would put an end to all his troubles.

During the time he was in Penshurst a trivial operation was performed upon him for a slight fistula, and this he exaggerated to the most unbounded degree. For a long time the surgeon had the greatest difficulty in persuading him to agree to the operation, and when at last his consent was obtained, and the knife was used, he became very violent and almost unmanageable. He tore away the bandages that were applied, and so prevented the wound from healing. The delusions that he cherished concerning his malady were so absurd that the doctor came to the conclusion that his mind was affected, and gave this as his opinion when called as a witness at the trial.

He developed an extraordinary idea at this time that the doctor wished to poison him, and when his landlord sought to reason with him on the subject he would not listen.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "I have proofs—strong proofs! See this halfpenny. I put it in my medicine, and it turned bright. What better proof do you want? The doctor wishes to kill me, and perhaps it would be as well that I should die!"

He also spoke about killing himself, and once he asked his landlord to shoot him.

In the summer of 1854, Luigi Baranelli left Penshurst and went to London, where he had an old friend, who passed by the name of Lambert, living in Newman Street, Oxford Street. This man the Italian had known for five years as Joseph Lambert, but, as it transpired at the trial, his name was in reality Latham. He had separated from his wife under an agreement entered into between them, and at the time of the murder was living with a woman named Jeans, with whom he had cohabited for a period of 14 years, and that probably accounted for his change of name.

When Baranelli arrived in London he took up his abode with the Lamberts, at first going there for meals only, but afterwards hiring a room in the house. The Lamberts seem to have treated him with the utmost generosity and kindness, but he was an idle, easy man, who never seemed to care about doing anything for himself. He received money from a club, and had twenty pounds a year from a family in Scotland, having been in the service of one of the members thereof in Italy.

Shortly after Baranelli went to live with Mr. Lambert they all removed from Newman Street to a house in Foley Place, taking with them another lodger, Mrs. Williamson, a widow, who was in partnership with the soi-disant Mrs. Lambert in a millinery business.

While residing in Newman Street Mrs. Williamson and Luigi became on very familiar terms. Indeed, their intimacy was such that the lady began to think herself pregnant, and five or six weeks after the removal to Foley Place she informed Mr. Lambert of her condition, and told him the whole story concerning his other lodger and herself. They had occupied adjoining bedrooms at the top of the house, away from the others, and the intrigue had been carried on with perfect ease and secrecy. She had, however, it appeared, become tired of her Italian lover, for she prayed Mr. Lambert to turn him out of the house.

On learning of these disgraceful proceedings, Mr. Lambert, good and virtuous man, living in adultery himself, at once flew into a rage with his old friend Baranelli. Rushing into the room where the latter was, he ordered the unfortunate foreigner to quit his roof without delay.

"Do you wish Mr. Baranelli to leave the house?" inquired the irate landlord, turning to Mrs. Williamson, who had been called into the other apartment.

"I think it would be better," the lady replied demurely.

"I will go," said Baranelli, and immediately went upstairs and got his carpet-bag. Before leaving, however, the offending lodger expressed a wish to see his false lady-love alone, and Mr. and Mrs. Lambert retired from the room.

When the pair were thus left to themselves, Baranelli implored his faithless Jenny not to throw him over, but to meet him sometimes to renew the pleasures of the past, but the widow was obdurate. She absolutely refused to see him under any circumstances, and the hopes of the Italian were for ever blasted. He took out money and offered it to the false one, but she indignantly declined it, and the poor swain departed from the house cast down and broken-hearted.

We have already seen what an emotional being Baranelli was. The deaths of his wives had well-nigh driven him to

suicide, and now this last grief was to drive him to murder. He had been in the Middlesex Hospital, too, for a time, with his old complaint, and that had preyed upon his mind, making him very unhappy. It will thus be understood that his mind must have been in a frantic state.

After the split with the Lamberts, Luigi went to lodge with a Mrs. Gurney, and from her house sent two letters of a most affectionate character to Mrs. Williamson. These the lady destroyed, after showing them to Mr. Lambert. They were couched in highly extravagant terms. The first told her how he held her honour in his hands, and that it was her duty to see him. He begged her to do so most abjectly, but it was of no avail. Mrs. Williamson had resolved to have nothing more to do with him, and so the letter was burnt without any answer being sent. The second letter urged her to see him, if but for a moment, at All Souls' Church, in Regent Street, on the following evening, any time between eight and ten. He said he was going to Paris, and wished to bid her adieu before taking his depar-

Inquired for Mrs. Williamson.

ture; but the repentant Jenny paid no attention to it, and it was torn up and cast to the winds, as was the man who had written it.

Finding that Mrs. Williamson took no notice of his appeals, Baranelli became desperate. He did not go to Paris, but remained in London, and began with the greatest possible deliberation to carry out his plans of revenge.

It was not upon Jane Williamson that he desired to wreak his vengeance. He had no grudge against her. His whole soul was consumed with fury against his former friend, Lambert, and his wife, or, rather, mistress. He attributed his misery to their machinations. He believed that they had influenced Mrs. Williamson against him. His unbalanced brain conceived the notion that they had thrust themselves between him and the object of his affections, and accordingly he determined that they should suffer.

He cast about in his mind for a method of slaughter.

When his darling Jenny and he had been on terms of the closest intimacy, he had taken her one night to see the "Corsican Brothers," a piece which was then in the zenith of its fame at the Lyceum, with Fechter in the part more recently played by Sir Henry Irving. On that night he appeared transported with delight when one of the brothers killed a man who had killed the other brother, and he informed his companion that he would like to appear to her after he was dead in the same manner the ghost did in the play. She told him she thought it was very ridiculous to talk in such a way, and that she wouldn't like him to appear when he was dead. Although Château-Renaud is supposed in the drama to have been slain in a duel with shortened swords, this plan of taking life did not recommend itself to the half-maddened Baranelli. For a long time the pistol had been in his mind as a weapon to be used against himself by his own hand. Why, he thought, should it not be good enough for Lambert?

Having surveyed the matter from every point of view, he satisfied himself that the pistol would be the correct article to send his enemy out of the world with. To that end he went to a shop in Oxford Street, where such weapons were sold. The assistant showed him a pair which were valued at 15s., but this price was too high to suit the would-be murderer's pocket, and, after some haggling, Baranelli secured them for 12s. 6d. Delighted with his purchase, the Italian hurried away, forgetting at the moment to buy powder and bullets. That omission soon led him back to the same shop, where he invested some more money in ammunition.

He was now fully equipped for his fell purpose, and nothing was likely to deter him from committing the deed.

On the fatal morning he rose early, and had breakfast. Mrs. Gurney, his landlady, said she had never seen him so calm and collected. There was nothing in his manner to suggest insanity on this particular day. He was not talkative, certainly, but the burden which had oppressed his spirits seemed to have been cast aside, and he appeared to be in an excellent humour with himself and all the world. It had not been always so since he went to lodge there. Many times Mrs. Gurney had heard him pacing his room far into the night. Once, she remembered distinctly, he had been talking to himself so loudly that the worthy dame imagined he was having a quarrel with some visitor, and went up to his apartment, only to find that he was quite alone, and that the noise she had been listening to was merely his own incoherent ravings. It was her rooted opinion that the foreign gentleman was rather more than half-cracked.

And she was not alone in thinking thus. The associates of his own race at his club believed that he was not in his right senses, while the house-surgeon and nurses at the Middlesex Hospital, where he had been for treatment, were decidedly impressed with the idea of his insanity. Mrs. Williamson, too, had been heard to say that she thought he was going mad at the very time when he was taking her out for walks and to the theatre. She told him that he read too many operas, and that he had become so imbued with their plots that he identified himself with the characters therein.

On being questioned upon this point in court by Mr. McEnteer, who appeared for the defence, she stated that she would not go so far as to say that he was actually insane, but she considered him a man of extraordinarily vivid imagination, having strange delusions upon many points. He was possessed of a belief that some doctor was pursuing him with evil intent, and he complained to her that she had caused him to forget his child—referring to a daughter who was living in Kent.

To return, however, to the fatal morning. After breakfast he sallied forth. The two pistols, with powder and bullets, were then in his pockets. From his own lodgings he walked direct to the house of the Lamberts, in Foley Place. A charwoman was cleaning the passage, and he asked her for Mr. and Mrs. Lambert. She told him they were not up yet, and he made no remark. He then inquired for Mrs. Williamson, and was informed that she was still in bed in her room at the top of the house. The charwoman knew him well, and could observe nothing strange in his manner. He walked past her, taking his way straight to the bedroom of the two persons against whom he held the grievance. This room was on the ground floor behind the front room. It was, in fact, what is generally known as the back parlour.

Baranelli turned the handle of the door, and it opened, having been left unlocked the whole of the night. He walked boldly in, and half-closed the door behind him. The bed stood at the back of the door, with Mr. Lambert sleeping next to it. Mrs. Lambert was awake, but her so-called husband was fast asleep. The woman was too frightened at Baranelli's appearance to make any outcry.

"Mr. Lambert! Mr. Lambert!" he called; and then, without any further warning, he placed the pistol close behind the head of his victim, and fired.

The shot took effect at the back of the neck, severing the spinal cord, and the man was dead in an instant.

At first Mrs. Lambert covered up her head with the bedclothes, but in a second or two she recovered her presence of mind, and sprang to the floor. She then saw Baranelli with

a pistol in his left hand. He passed it rapidly to his right, and as she leapt at him he fired again, the bullet passing through the woman's arm, and lodging in her neck. She at once fell insensible upon the bed.

Hearing the two shots, the charwoman immediately rushed for a policeman. When the constable arrived upon the scene he found the lifeless body of Lambert in the bed, and the woman who passed as his wife stretched out near him. Baranelli was not to be seen.

After committing the crime the murderer made his way upstairs to Mrs. Williamson's room. The door was locked, but Baranelli thundered at it.

"Open the door!—open the door!" he shouted.

His voice was so changed by agitation that Mrs. Williamson did not recognise it.

"Who is there?" she asked, getting out of bed.

"Luigi Baranelli," was the reply.

She unfastened the door, and he staggered in.

AS SHE LEAPT AT HIM HE FIRED AGAIN.

"I am an assassin!" he yelled, and ran to the window.

Mrs. Williamson saw that he had a pistol in his hand, but was too terrified to attempt to take it from him. He used no violence towards her, nor did he seem to notice her presence.

"I am an assassin!" he repeated, and made his way to another room opening out of the lady's.

By this time footsteps were heard ascending the stairs, and just as they reached the top a third shot was fired, this time from the chamber adjoining Mrs. Williamson's.

At the sound a constable darted forward and found the murderer weltering in his own blood. He had shot himself in the face, severely injuring his nose.

Seeing that help was instantly required, the policeman hastened away, and having met some brother officers, he told them what had happened, and directed them to the house. He then hurried on, and brought Mr. Bridge, the divisional surgeon, whose verdict upon Lambert was soon pronounced. The man had died instantaneously.

Of the other two injured persons he discovered that Mrs. Lambert was in the worse plight, and directed both her and Baranelli to be taken to the hospital. There the murderer made a confession to Dr. Bridge which the surgeon reduced to writing, but which was lost before the trial.

The gist of it, however, was that, driven to desperation by Mrs. Williamson's cruel treatment in refusing to see him or answer his letters, he had perpetrated the awful deed after due consideration. The poor wretch made no effort to escape the hands of justice after his ineffectual attempt at suicide, and awaited his trial in a despondent and hopeless attitude.

On the 13th of April, 1855, when the country was ringing with the news of the brave doings of our soldiers in the Crimea, Luigi Baranelli was placed in the dock at Newgate. There were few who pitied the miserable-looking creature who stood shivering before Justice Erle. He had killed an Englishman—he, a foreigner!—hang him up and have done with him!

The defence, of course, pleaded insanity, and insanity glittered in the dark eye, gleaming out of its cavernous depths; but Dr. McMurdo, the prison surgeon, declared he could find no madness in him, though the Penshurst doctor swore he had been a lunatic for years, and the doctors of Middlesex Hospital and others testified to his suffering from melancholia. Prejudice against the unhappy Italian ran high. As has been said, a double murder of a peculiarly atrocious character had been committed by a foreigner shortly before, and the jury were inclined to make an example of all foreigners, mad or sane it mattered not to them, so long as a murder had been done.

So Luigi Baranelli was condemned to die, and when the judge pronounced sentence he had to be carried from the dock in a state of collapse. On the 30th of April he was led out to the scaffold at Newgate, but he was more dead than alive before the drop fell. Old Calcraft, with his inhuman method of execution, was the hangman, and when he pulled the lever, amid shouts of execration from a half-drunken and frenzied mob, there was not one kindly heart to give a throb for the poor, lonely, and friendless child down in Kent who had once called the dangling lump of clay by the name of "father."

A PATHETIC TRAGEDY.

JOHN RICHARD JEFFERY'S Cold-Blooded Murder of his Infant Son.

"One to destroy is murder by the law
And gibbets keep the lifted hand in awe;
To murder thousands, takes a specious name,
War's glorious art, and gives immortal fame."
—LORD BROUGHAM, "Social Science Congress," Manchester, 1866.

"NO, no, daddy, I want to stay with granny! Don't take me away, daddy! Let me stop with my dear granny! Oh, granny, granny, don't let him dress me and take me away from you!"

Those were the words of a fine, sturdy little fellow of between five and six years of age, spoken to his father and his grandmother at a late hour one Sunday night in the month of July, 1866. The little fellow had been abed for some three or four hours when his father, John Richard Jeffery, called at the house of his wife's mother to take the child from her. Jeffery by trade was a tailor, and his lot, it must be admitted, had not been a happy one. But the "snip," as he was called by those who knew him, was not a man who was liked by anybody. His sedentary business possibly influenced his temper and made him a very undesirable matrimonial mate. So Mrs. Jeffery and her husband led a "cat-and-dog" life," until quarrel after quarrel led to a separation, the wife and mother of the five-year-old boy, to whom we have alluded, running away from her home and living with another man.

This woman's mother had taken a great fancy to her grandchild, and had consequently adopted him. His name was Richard Arthur Jeffery. She had fed, clothed, and to the best of her ability educated the lad and brought him up respectably, and for her goodness to him the child gave her his love in return.

"Don't take me away, daddy! Do let me stay with granny! I will be good!" said the little fellow pleadingly. But his father, with a savage look in his face, struck the boy across the face with his open hand, and, with an oath, made him sit up and be dressed.

In vain the old woman begged his son-in-law to let the child sleep where he was for the night, but the man was savage and obdurate; so little Dick Jeffery was taken from his comfortable cot and marched off by his father, sobbing. From a street off Holborn, where the old woman had a single room, father and son walked in the direction of the Seven Dials, at that time—in the middle sixties—one of the lowest neighbourhoods of London.

It was past ten o'clock on the Sunday night, and the beer-shops were doing a roaring trade. John Jeffery patronised one after the other, and drank his fill, the poor little child still crying and refusing to be pacified, although the unnatural parent tried to stay his agony of mind with an occasional halfpenny and many a "sip" from his glass.

The taverns were closed. The "Dials" witnessed the usual Sabbath brawls and pot-drinking when their doors were closed, and John Jeffery fraternised with his friends in the gutter, the poor little fellow shuddering with fear and still begging to be taken back to his grandmother. With a wrench at the child's wrist, his father hurried him along to a slum off the "Dials," where a sister of his occupied a single room with her husband, who was a cripple.

There he obtained permission to sleep for the night. The picture which creeps into the mind's eye of this wretched hovel is too terrible to contemplate. Briefly, as described afterwards, we have the following record:

"Towards morning he (John Jeffery) got up, alleging that he could not sleep for vermin, and insisted upon leaving with the boy. His sister entreated him not to take the child away at that dead hour of the night, but in vain. He then went to a cupboard, and, taking from it some broken victuals, he said he was going a long journey into the country, and that the boy would never see his 'aunty' again. He had previously gone out to one of the many chandler's shops in the neighbourhood and bought a candle. On returning with it, he cut it in two, lighting one piece and placing the other in his pocket. As he and the child left the wretched dwelling the little one cried and implored his aunty not to let him be taken away."

But the wretched man would listen to no entreaties. He had premeditated a crime which, in a cold-blooded manner, he had determined to carry out, and nothing could turn him from it. There was such a devilish look in his eyes that it almost paralysed the child, and inspired him with a dread of his own father which must have been pathetic indeed. Even the sister had her forebodings, and followed her brother into the street, and begged him again and again to leave the child with her.

"No!" he said. "Curse you all! This is no child for you to look after. That —— knows who the father is, and, worse luck, she's my wife, and I am responsible for the very existence of the —— offspring of another man!"

His sister followed him down St. Martin's Lane, and even besought a constable to interfere, declaring that she knew that before the summer's sun had risen upon a new day a frightful tragedy would be enacted. But the officer had his instructions, and was prepared to carry them out to the letter.

"I tell you, marm," said the policeman, "it's no use you worrying me about the kid. You say the man is the child's father, and that you are his sister? If that's correct the father has custody of the child, and unless I see him knocking the youngster about I can do nothing."

And the poor woman picked up little Dick Jeffery, kissed him a dozen times, and set him down upon the pavement, and father and son (the latter reluctantly) went down St. Martin's Lane, in the direction of St. Giles.

It was a lovely July morning, and even the slums of St. Giles, then one of the dirtiest and most poverty-stricken districts of London, was looking cheerful as the bright morning sun tried hard to turn the dust-stained windows of the hovels into mirrors by which to reflect itself. A few costers' barrows were being laden with vegetables, and some of the porters from Covent Garden Market were returning from their work to take their breakfasts in the lodging-houses which then abounded in this anything but salubrious neighbourhood. In one of these habitations was a cellar, in which was a water supply that seemed to be the only source from which the same could be obtained by the numerous occupiers of the hundreds of tenements in the immediate neighbourhood.

Even at that early hour of between five and six some of the early risers were carrying their pails to fetch water for their husbands' breakfast, or for the purpose of washing and cleaning. On this particular morning a young woman had gone into this place to draw some for her domestic purposes, and was being followed by others on the same errand.

Hardly had she entered the cellar when she uttered a piercing shriek, and the large jug and pail which she carried fell with a crash. Nobody knew what had happened, and not a few of them made off in their fear. One or two, however, entered the cellar, and a sight met their eyes which could never have been forgotten to their dying days.

On the ground lay the young woman in a dead faint, amongst the débris of the broken crockery-ware, and looking for all the world like a corpse. And there, straight before them, was the terrible sight which had caused her to become senseless through her fright.

Suspended from a rusty bar of iron which projected from the old brickwork of the cellar hung the body of the poor little fellow, Richard Arthur Jeffery, "Dicky," as his tiny schoolmates called him. His small hands were clenched,

and those little fists were tightly doubled up as if he had meditated a blow at the villain who had taken his pure young life. His eyes were starting from their sockets, and there was blood trickling from his mouth and nostrils. It was a terrible sight, and it was little to be wondered at that the woman who first and so unexpectedly came upon it was shocked to insensibility.

Poor little Dick Jeffery had been murdered by his father in this cruel, cold-blooded manner. The helpless, weak little being had had his bright young life snapped by the hands of the very medium of his creation.

It was a terrible thing to reflect upon, and even in the festering haunts of crime and vice which were then the features of St. Giles and the "Seven Dials," there went a shudder through the frames of those who saw poor little Dick's body taken away to the mortuary.

Of course, there was no need to look far for the man who had perpetrated the crime. The father; there could be none other. But he had fled—nobody knew where. The hue and cry was out, but no clue could be discovered, and perhaps to this day the man might never have been discovered had it not been for the fact that "conscience doth make cowards of us all."

Some weeks after this pathetic tragedy John Richard Jeffery, tailor, voluntarily surrendered himself to justice, at a place near Halifax, for the murder of his son, aged between five and six years of age, in London.

He was transferred to the metropolis, and tried at the Central Criminal Court, the murder being brought home to him by circumstantial, but still irresistible, evidence, and, upon receiving sentence of death, he acknowledged his guilt.

After being conveyed to the condemned cell at Newgate Jeffery behaved in a quiet, repentant manner, and received gratefully between that time and his execution the religious advice and consolation afforded by the Rev. Mr. Lloyd Jones, then the prison chaplain, and the Rev. Mr. M'Cree, a Baptist minister.

On the morning of the 9th of October, 1866, at half-past seven, the Sheriffs of London (Mr. Alderman Waterlow and Mr. Francis Lycett) with Mr. De Jersey (one of the Under-Sheriffs) went to Newgate to attend the execution. The convict, having been taken into a room to be pinioned, partly in reply to a question by Mr. Sheriff Lycett and partly on his own motion, acknowledged in the most emphatic manner the justice of his sentence, and said he was prepared to die.

One who was present stated "at this trying moment he was completely penitent; and while his arms were being pinioned he prayed for mercy without ceasing, and in tones so imploring and touching as to move everybody present. He said that he forgave his enemies, and especially his wife, whom he expected to meet in heaven, and he expressed his gratitude to the officers of the prison, and especially to Mr. Jones, the governor, for their uniform kindness to him.

"The prison bell began to toll, and the convict was conducted to the scaffold, which he mounted with a light step.

THE JUG AND PAIL FELL WITH A CRASH.

As he appeared on the drop he was at first assailed with shouts of execration, but these soon died away."

Jeffery advanced till he stood on the trap-door immediately beneath the fatal beam. He was ghastly pale, and great beads of perspiration stood on his forehead. The chaplain was stationed near him, reading passages from the Burial Service, while the hangman made his awful preparations. The noose having been adjusted, a white cap was drawn over the culprit's face, hiding his features, and from beneath it Jeffery could be heard muttering, "Lord, have mercy on me!"

All being ready, the under-sheriff gave the signal, and the drop fell. The convict struggled violently for a second or two, and then all was over. After hanging for an hour the corpse was cut down and taken within the prison for interment

And so perished John Richard Jeffery, who sacrificed the innocent life of the poor, lovable little child for the supposed sins of its mother.

JAMES BILLINGTON,

A Few Memories of the Late Executioner.

IN a quiet, unpretentious street in Farnworth, some twenty years ago might have been found a small hairdresser's shop. On entering and demanding to be shaved, you would have been met by a short, dark man, with a rather pleasing expression. The dexterity with which he wielded the razor would, undoubtedly, have pleased you, and, having paid the modest sum demanded, you would have left the establishment well satisfied with the feel and appearance of your neck and chin. If some ten years later that same unassuming little man had been called upon to attend to your neck and chin in the exercise of his other calling, you would also have had no cause—or opportunity—for complaint.

Taking up your Sunday paper towards the end of August, 1884, you might have noticed that on the 26th of that month one James Tobin was hanged at Wrexford, and that the executioner, Berry, officiated, while on the same page you could have seen that Joseph Laycock was duly hanged at Leeds on the same day for the brutal murder of his wife and four children. The man who was entrusted with carrying out this execution was one James Billington, a name unfamiliar to the public, but well known and respected in Farnworth. This new executioner was no other than our friend the quiet hairdresser.

How was it that Billington came to combine the office of executioner with his trade as a barber? Well, for years he had made a careful study of the executions which had taken place from time to time, and felt convinced that the method then in vogue was not the most humane or expeditious. He had some knowledge of mathematics, and he made a practice of calculating out the "drops" which science told him should be given to the condemned, and comparing them with those actually allowed, with the result that he was strongly of the opinion that, while Marwood failed by giving too great a fall to the bodies, Berry was apt to restrict the length of rope, rendering instantaneous death very problematical.

Several knotty points, however, confronted him and demanded solution before the question of drop could be properly settled. He remembered that on one occasion the short drop had managed to drag off the convict's head, and he naturally feared that a longer drop might have the same horrid effect. How was this to be prevented?

Again the question of "precedent" was a stumbling-block. The methods sanctioned in the past were almost hallowed in the eyes of the officials, and for an unknown man to attempt to alter them was a thing unheard of.

Still motives of humanity urged on the hairdresser as he pondered over the problems while waiting for customers, and he resolved to make a bid for the post of assistant-executioner, with a view to studying the matter at first hand.

Several times he applied for permission to act as assistant, and as often was refused. Then came the day when the county of York found that the recognised hangman was engaged elsewhere, and the authorities were only too glad to avail themselves of Billington's offer to hang Laycock.

These explanations are necessary, for it would be doing a grave injustice to the memory of a man who was greatly respected by all his neighbours in Farnworth, and whose sons are also held in high esteem, if we permitted people to think that it was a love of the horrible or a mere morbid curiosity that led James Billington to first act as hangman. He was actuated solely by a desire to divest the infliction of the death penalty of any uncertainty or brutality.

The execution of Laycock was fixed for the 26th of August, 1884, at Armley Gaol, the prison in which the notorious Charles Peace met the doom he so richly deserved.

Anxious that there should be no hitch of any sort, Billington went to the gaol early on the Saturday preceding the fatal day, and carefully studied the mechanism of the drop, setting and releasing the trap-doors, adjusting the rope for varying drops, until he felt assured that, even if he were nervous, he could make no mistake.

Unwilling to act entirely without advice, he held a consultation with the prison doctor, and together they calculated the length of rope to be given to the unfortunate man awaiting in the gloom of the condemned cell the dread summons to death.

The morning arrived, and Billington entered the cell to pinion the first of the long list of culprits with whom he was later to make acquaintance. Laycock made no resistance while the hangman buckled the broad belt round his waist and secured his elbows and wrists. The procession was then formed, Billington following his victim—"herding him," as it were, to the shambles.

Once on the scaffold, the convict's legs were speedily strapped, and the executioner adjusted the rope. Continually through his mind kept flashing the question, "When am I going to be nervous?" Strange as it may seem, James Billington did not feel in the least degree timid at his first execution. This is the more remarkable, for in the conduct of every-day affairs he proved himself most sympathetic and feeling, while his own family looked on him, to the day of his death, as a model man. "No lads could have had a better father!" was the verdict passed on him by his two surviving sons, and it has been endorsed by all who knew James Billington.

In the early eighties it was customary to allow a few moments on the scaffold, till a certain passage was reached in the burial service, and for the lever then to be pulled. The new hangman waited, his hand on the fatal bolt which was to hurl a fellow-creature to eternity. He heard the words of the beautiful Liturgy, and all the time he continued to wonder, "Why am I not afraid?" At the appointed moment, with a swift jerk, the lever was drawn, and Laycock fell into space. Death was absolutely instantaneous.

We have rather dilated on this particular execution because it had a great effect on the hangman's mind, and eventually led him to bring about some very important changes in the conduct of executions.

As James Billington returned to Bolton that evening he felt that the die was cast. If he was to be spurned because he had taken up the part of hangman, he would be spurned for the rest of his life; if his friends remained true to him, they would not desert him should he perform some more executions. At any rate, he was determined to continue to act as executioner, for, even from his first experience, he saw several matters which humanity demanded should be remedied.

He was not in a position to do so, however, for a considerable time. None the less, he never forgot the lessons which he learnt at the blotting out of Joseph Laycock, and when the time was ripe he turned them to good effect.

Having served the county of York when they were hard pressed, it was but fair that James Billington should be appointed executioner for that county. It is a mistaken idea that we have nowadays a public hangman. The last man so appointed was Calcraft. Following the old precedent, the sheriffs of each county have to make arrangements for the proper despatch of every malefactor cast for death, and each county was at liberty, till quite lately, to appoint its own executioner. The latest regulations still leave the sheriff this power, always with the proviso that the man appointed is duly qualified and certified as such.

From 1884 to 1891 James Billington acted as executioner for Yorkshire alone, although his services were occasionally called into requisition for "distant" hangings when Berry was engaged. During the whole of this time he was gaining experience, and, self-taught as he was, he never had a mishap of any kind.

When, in 1891, Berry decided to retire from his post and betake himself to the lecture platform, James Billington applied to the Home Office for recognition as the regular hangman, and, as his record was so good, he was appointed, or, to be strictly accurate, his name was placed first on the list of those qualified and willing to act as hangman, for the office of executioner has been abolished.

From 1891 up till the day of his death, James Billington only missed officiating at one execution, when he had a "free day." That lapse was in July, 1899, and the circumstances which attended it will be detailed later.

Now, what were the points which had attracted the attention of James Billington? Well, in the first place, he recognised that an execution is not intended to be an act of vengeance on the part of the State against the individual, but is merely the official removal of the offender, of the diseased member, from the body corporate. Therefore, he argued,

JAMES BILLINGTON
PUBLIC · EXECUTIONER. FROM 1884 TO 1901 ·

everything that tends to prolong or enhance the culprit's agony is an act contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the law. That being so, the greatest possible expedition should be used at all executions, and Billington introduced the very rapid system which, with a few improvements made by his sons, now obtains.

The solemn procession which used to be marshalled in the condemned cell has now vanished. Those whose duty it is to accompany the condemned to the scaffold do so more or less informally. Again, the delay on the scaffold—relic of olden times, when the doomed were expected to address the public and to devote a certain portion of their time to prayer—has been reduced to a minimum. There is absolutely no waiting, no second is wasted, and the instant that all is ready the lever is pulled and the wretch is a lifeless corpse.

From the first Billington was perfectly certain that the method pursued by the authorities was wrong. The position in which the rope was placed around the neck rendered it extremely dangerous for the requisite drop to be given, the executioner running the risk either of pulling off a convict's head or of failing to insure instantaneous death.

This matter he pondered over for a long time, and was eventually able to bring the Home Office authorities to his way of thinking.

His next reform was with regard to the method of pinioning employed. With a belt, with short straps for wrists and elbows, considerably over a minute and a-half was required to prepare the subject for the gallows. He suggested that the strict confinement of the hands and arms was in no way essential, always providing that sufficient freedom was not allowed to enable the condemned to clutch either the rope or the side of the drop. His recommendation was inquired into, and the belt discarded for the more scientific double-buckled strap, which is rapidly adjusted and answered its purpose perfectly well.

On proceeding to a gaol for the purpose of an execution, James Billington invariably made a most careful and searching examination of the whole of the mechanism of the drop. Even though he had hanged a man on the same scaffold a few days before, he never omitted this scrutiny, for he remembered the case of John Lee, where the murderer was reprieved owing to the trap-doors failing to fall. Similarly the long list of those whose death agony was prolonged through the breaking of the rope made Billington peculiarly scrupulous in the tests which he applied.

He never took the word of anybody as to the fitness of the materials supplied him, but invariably insisted on assuring himself of their excellence. It is to this minute attention to details that Billington owed the success which attended him throughout his long career, for during the period in which he acted as executioner he never had the slightest mishap, nor did he cause the poor wretches on whom he had to operate any unnecessary suffering.

His life as a hangman was uneventful—the best tribute which can be paid to that mournful functionary. Still, on one occasion a warrant was issued for his arrest.

It was in January, 1891, that James Billington was haled to Cork to execute one Timothy Cadogan, who had brutally done a gentleman to death.

"Pat" met his fate in the customary way, and Billington, having removed the halter and straps, left the gaol, as was his usual custom.

In due course an inquest was opened on the body of the defunct Timothy, and one of the jurymen asked the coroner to produce the hangman for cross-examination. Mr. Coroner pointed out that such a proceeding was quite unnecessary, but the other jurymen backed up their colleague, and reminded the representative of power that some years before, in the same prison, it was found impossible to return a verdict on the body of Dr. Cross, the poisoner, because Berry had not attended the inquest.

A warrant was accordingly granted against Billington, but, the punctiliousness of the Hibernian jury being thus satisfied, and the papers having made a little capital out of "Arresting the hangman," it was never served, and the matter was allowed to drop.

During the latter years of his life Billington abandoned the calling of hairdresser, giving the shop over to the management of his two sons, William and John, for that of hotel-keeper, in which employment he gained the sincere respect of all who came in contact with him.

Always an extremely reticent man, it was well-nigh impossible to get him to speak of any of the doomed who had passed through his hands; there were, however, two exceptions. Thomas Neil Cream when on the scaffold, was attended to by the subject of this memoir. After the rope had been adjusted and the white cap had been drawn down over his face, Billington stepped back to pull the lever. Just as he had commenced to move it Cream exclaimed, "I am Jack ——" In relating this incident, Billington invariably added, "If I had known that he was going to speak I'd have waited for the end of that sentence." And to the very last the executioner declared that Cream and Jack-the-Ripper were one and the same person. He also used to describe the peculiarly repulsive and sardonic smile of the celebrated poisoner.

The only other "patient" to whom Billington ever referred was Louise Masset, whom he frequently described as the most callous person he had ever seen on the scaffold.

We have mentioned that Billington before his last illness missed only one execution which he could have performed from the time that he first became the general executioner. That was on July 25th, 1899.

Two days previously he was taken seriously ill, but made an effort to rise from his couch and fulfil the duties which he had been engaged to do, but, in spite of his determination, he was totally unable to stand, and his son William officiated for him, as will be described in a subsequent number in the life of the present executioner.

The last hanging which James Billington carried out was, strangely enough, that of a fellow townsman of his own, one Patrick M'Kenna, who had murdered his wife at Bolton, and was executed at Manchester on the 3rd of December, 1901.

On returning from the mournful duty Billington was seized with a terrible cold, which rapidly developed into pneumonia. He was booked to execute the two Millers, at Newcastle, on the 8th of December, and as the time passed and the date drew near, he became very anxious, for he hated missing an engagement under any circumstances.

On the morning of December 7th, while his attendants were out of the room, he crawled out of bed and commenced to dress, declaring that he had never broken his compact with the Government, and would not begin then.

He only managed to put on his trousers before he fell, semi-conscious, on the floor. The sound brought up his friends, and Billington was replaced in his bed.

Just at that period there were several executions pending, which his sons carried out for him, making flying visits back from the gaols to the sick-room. The best possible attendance was procured for Billington, but a few days sufficed to see the end, and he passed away at the age of 54.

At his funeral many of the most influential people in Bolton were present, and messages of sympathy were sent to his family from all over the Kingdom.

The press, unfortunately, discovered a mare's nest. It was stated in many papers that Billington had been a personal friend of Patrick M'Kenna, the last man he executed, and that it was really grief at having to carry out the last sentence on that worthless scoundrel that brought the hangman to his grave. To this canard we are able to give an unqualified denial. Though Billington may possibly have seen M'Kenna in the streets of Bolton, the first time he ever met him, in the accepted sense of the word, was when he pinioned him at the door of the condemned cell.

Throughout the whole of his life no man was more particular about the company he kept than James Billington. He had, of course, duties, which, to some, might be repulsive to perform, but in his private life he kept himself unspotted from the world. With him passed away a valuable servant—for, whatever may be said, at present the executioner is a necessity—and one who had made the most important step in raising the infliction of the capital punishment from mere rule of thumb to that of exact science. While we have to solemnly remove offending members from the State it is in the common interests of humanity that this should be done in the most expeditious and the least painful method. James Billington effected this.

The Portrait of James Billington, which appears on the preceding page, is engraved from a special drawing made by the Editor of this paper. This is the first time a faithful likeness of the deceased executioner has been published. Regular readers of "FAMOUS CRIMES" have now secured portraits of Calcraft, Marwood, Berry, and James Billington. We will shortly print pictures of the two sons of the latter, who have officially executed since their father's decease. No such series has ever appeared, and subscribers will, we are sure, appreciate the efforts we make to give them a complete and reliable record in "FAMOUS CRIMES."

NEXT WEEK. **In our next issue we will commence the publication of a Series of Illustrated Articles on THE METHODS OF EXECUTION; Past and Present.**

The Shocking Murder of Eliza Grimwood.

How a Remarkably Handsome Young Female was Brutally Murdered by an Unknown Miscreant in the Year of Queen Victoria's Coronation.

"Hither, they cried, direct your eyes, and see
The men of pleasure, dress, and gallantry."
—POPE, "Temple of Fame."

QUEEN VICTORIA had succeeded to the throne of England. She was to be crowned in June of the succeeding year. The time had nearly arrived for the gorgeous ceremony in Westminster Abbey, and all London was agog. Already the papers were filled with preliminary accounts of what the function would be like, and announcements of windows to let and floors to be had covered columns of advertisements. The inhabitants of the Metropolis were looking eagerly forward to the day, so close at hand, when the fascinating young princess would be their queen indeed—when the holy oil poured on her head by the Primate of the English Church would seal the sovereignty of the lady ruler of these isles.

Of a sudden, amid the joyous preparations for the great event, there came a shock to the people of London, and the shudder which followed thrilled to the most remote districts of Britain. A ghastly murder was perpetrated in the Waterloo Road, and honest folk turned aside from their rejoicing to read with horror of the diabolical deed.

Even as far back as 1838 Waterloo Road had gained an unenviable notoriety. Probably the police will say it has not much improved in these later days. The ladies of a certain class who dwell in the vicinity of this broad artery of London may not be quite so fashionable as were those of the early Victorian period, but they are quite as importunate, and very likely more criminally dangerous.

At that time there resided at No. 12, Wellington Terrace, in the Waterloo Road, a young woman of the name of Eliza Grimwood. She belonged to the order of Rahab, and was between 28 and 29 years of age. She originally hailed from Ipswich, and was of a respectable family, her father being a builder of the Suffolk town.

Eliza was possessed of more—much more—than her fair share of feminine charms, and hence her undoing. Whether her cousin, George Hubbard, was the tempter who had first led her from the paths of virtue or not the chronicler of the crime cannot tell, but this he knows for certain, George and she had lived together for 11 years, which would only make her 17 or 18 at the time they began to cohabit. And George was a married man. He had deserted his wife for his all-too-fascinating cousin, and the pair ultimately took up their abode in the Waterloo Road, as aforetold. George was a bricklayer, and worked at his trade with considerable assiduity, but he was a complaisant man, and when Lizzie brought home a male friend he would discreetly retire to an attic to be out of the way.

He was frequently given to effacing himself in this manner, for the fair lady of his choice found many admirers in the vicinity of the Strand, and Mr. Hubbard often spent solitary nights in consequence.

The Strand Theatre was the happy hunting-ground more particularly affected by Miss Grimwood. There she found the giddy butterflies that came fluttering about her net, and the Hubbard ménage throve and prospered exceedingly. Besides being a complaisant man, George Hubbard had no objection to share with Eliza the proceeds of her iniquity, but it is not shown that he was by any means an extravagant man. He was the landlord of the house, which was principally let out in rooms to ladies of the same easy principles as Miss Grimwood, and as tenants of that description usually pay through the nose for their apartments, it may be assumed that Mr. Hubbard did pretty well, and was seldom in the position of his illustrious female namesake whose cupboard was bare.

It was on Friday, the 26th of May, that Hubbard said good-bye to Eliza Grimwood for the last time.

"Going out, Liz?" he asked, after they had had a cup of tea together.

"Yes, dear, just going over to the theatre. You needn't wait up for me, as I'll likely be late. You can go to bed in the top room."

"All right, my lass," he replied. "I wish you luck!"

She went over to him and patted his cheek playfully.

"You're a good sort, George," she said, "and seldom make a row, unless it's over the Brummagem bloke. Good night! P'r'aps I'll see you when you go out to work in the morning."

So they parted, and between eight and nine Hubbard went to his lonely bed.

True to her word, Eliza went straight over to the Strand Theatre. She was known there, and was more respected than the other girls of her class, inasmuch as she was more abstemious. Liz Grimwood was never known to take a glass too much when she was at the theatre, and this was a good point in one so lost to shame in some other respects as this poor victim seems to have been.

She was seen in the pit of the theatre, talking to a man with a wide-brimmed hat, a man who looked like a foreigner, with large whiskers (then uncommon), and who wore the dress of a gentleman. This person treated her to a glass of sherry, but took nothing himself, and with him she entered a cabriolet and drove home about twelve o'clock. The servant, Mary Fisher, admitted them to the house, and that was the last ever seen of the man by anyone concerned with this history.

Early on Saturday morning, when going out to work, Hubbard was surprised to see the candlestick always used by Eliza on the mat inside the front door. This peculiar circumstance led him to go back to the room where the girl invariably slept with the men she brought home, viz., the back-parlour, which was fitted up as a bedroom. The door being on the jar, he peeped in, and saw what he imagined to be a bundle of clothes, with a half-covered crayfish among them. Eliza was not in bed, as he had surmised she would be.

Deeming something to be wrong, he rushed upstairs and thrust his head into the room on the first floor back. There a commercial traveller was in bed with a girl named Glover. He said nothing the first time, because a thought struck him to run down again and examine the bundle of clothes. He did so, and, to his infinite terror, discovered the body of the unfortunate Eliza, with her head almost severed from her body. What he had fancied was a crayfish, on a closer acquaintance, became the doubled-up knee of the hapless victim.

With hair on end and pallid face he dashed up the stairs a second time and roused the traveller and his light-o'-love.

"Come down!" he cried. "Lizzie has been murdered!"

Then he flew for the police.*

He found a constable on the bridge, and brought him back. A doctor was fetched, and before long the whole neighbourhood was in an uproar.

The surgeon who made the first cursory examination thought at the moment it was a case of suicide, but, on later investigation, it proved to be a deliberate and fiendish murder. The poor girl had been wounded in several places—in the abdomen and under the left breast—with a sharp-pointed instrument, about half-an-inch in the widest part; but the chief wound, and that which must have caused instant death, was in the neck, extending nearly from ear to ear, and bisecting the windpipe. Her left thumb was also cut, as if in struggling with her destroyer.

* The Force had not been established long, and was then known as the New Police.

Naturally enough, suspicion at once fell upon George Hubbard. When a man lives with a paramour and she is mysteriously murdered, the unthinking public will unhesitatingly brand the quasi-husband as the assassin without the faintest scintilla of proof. Hubbard's razor was missed in the first hurried search, and that was sufficient for the multitude. Hubbard's razor was found, but the mob had made up its mind by that time. The surgeons declared that the wounds could not have been inflicted by a razor; nevertheless the populace could not be shaken in their belief. Hubbard was the murderer, and Hubbard must suffer.

It was at first thought unaccountable that neither the persons in two rooms overhead, nor the female servant, who slept below, heard the slightest noise. This was ascribed to the instantaneous death from the nature of the wound.

Our readers will remember that never a sound was heard as Jack the Ripper despatched his victims. It was from the same cause. The sudden slash of the knife and—silence.

recently sharpened after having had the point broken. This witness also stated that Grimwood spoke of the foreigner as "a man of depraved habits." He was not a gentleman, but looked like a thief.

Edwin's evidence was to a great extent discredited by the police, who also seemed to have been infected by the Hubbard craze, and at last they got the bricklayer into their clutches, but not before the coroner's jury had brought in a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown."

It came about in this way: a letter was received by the coroner for Surrey, Mr. Carter, which was dated from Goswell Street, and was subscribed "John Walter Cavendish." The writer professed that he was the person who accompanied Eliza Grimwood from the theatre on the night of the murder, and that while he was with the woman Hubbard came downstairs, broke in upon them, and in a storm of rage, particularly directed against the unhappy woman,

AND WITH HIM SHE ENTERED A CABRIOLET.

When a search was made the poor girl's purse, with ten or eleven sovereigns in it, was missing, but a bank-book, showing she had £20 in a savings bank, and a small gold watch were left behind.

The evidence adduced at the inquest tended to show that Grimwood's murderer was the man who had accompanied her from the theatre, but the public would not have it so. They had already condemned Hubbard in their hearts, and all evidence was useless.

A girl named Catherine Edwin came forward with a story regarding a foreigner with whom Eliza Grimwood was acquainted. He was an Italian, she said, and Lizzie called him "her tormentor." This man asked Grimwood to marry him when they were all three together in a café in Piccadilly, but she returned no answer. In throwing off his coat while in the café the Italian dropped a large clasp-knife with a spring blade. Such a knife might have made the cut in Eliza's stays, she thought, as it had apparently been

turned him out of the house. Upon this Hubbard was arrested and lodged in Horsemonger Lane prison.

The police made what purported to be a diligent search after the writer of this letter, and in course of time traced it, as they pretended, to a man named McMillan, a very respectable young fellow, who assisted his father in a stationery and newsagent's business. McMillan disclaimed all knowledge of the missive, in spite of police asseverations, and so the matter dropped.

It was hinted by a writer in the "Times" that the letter was a police ruse to get the suspected man into their custody; however, their triumph was but momentary. Hubbard was discharged, but there were disgraceful scenes on the part of the mob. Great gatherings assembled in front of the police-court at Union Hall, in the Borough, besieging the place, and making frantic endeavours to seize and lynch the object of their unreasoning hate. So strong did this vindictive feeling against Hubbard run, that the magis-

trates, Messrs. Jeremy and Traill, would not allow the prisoner to be brought from Horsemonger Lane on the second occasion for fear of violence from the populace. They wished him to be discharged from the prison, that the crowd at the police-court might be defeated in their designs against the man. Hubbard's solicitor, however, demanded his client's discharge in open court, and so, at a late hour, the prisoner was brought up at a great risk, for the mob would not disperse, and received his freedom at the hands of the magistrates.

Word having passed round that Hubbard was within the precincts of the court, the crowd rapidly increased, and so violent did it become that it was thought advisable the prisoner should be let out by the back. So the unlucky man was hoisted over walls and through yards till at last he reached the Borough Road, where he mingled with the passers-by and was soon lost to view.

Some time afterwards a foreigner was arrested, chiefly on account of his luxuriant whiskers, but he quickly proved an alibi, and that was the end of the murder of Eliza Grimwood.

Hubbard was everywhere pursued by the virulent hatred of the people, till, finding no rest in England, he sought refuge in America, and in that new world was caught up by the whirl of the industrial wheel and disappeared for ever.

There is one little incident in the early life of Eliza Grimwood which the chronicler would like to mention. It appeals forcibly to the superstitious, and is not without significance to the general. When Eliza was at home in Ipswich the murder of Maria Martin at the Red Barn took place, and the girl, who was herself to become the victim of an assassin, was the first female to enter the barn and gaze upon the remains of the murdered Maria.

Was her own fate foreshadowed in that of the other?

PARRIS, the BOY MURDERER.

.. The Ryarsh Tragedy of 1876 ..

"For men there be, inured to horrid crimes,
That make us think that Nature slips at times!"
—OSLEY, "Man—and other Animals."

MAIDSTONE is the town of many murders. "Maidstone?" asked a great cynic once. "Let's see. Is that the place where they are always hanging people?" That is a caricature, of course, but certainly Kent, and especially that portion of the fair county, has an unsavoury record of great crimes, and many executions. It was gravely stated in several journals of repute, about the time of the Ryarsh tragedy, that no less than eight murders had taken place in that particular district during a period of twenty years, viz., from 1856 to 1876, inclusive. This statement may have been a little exaggerated, but I have myself authentic records of six crimes of that class in the same interval of time, and there may have been one or two more, the history of which is buried in oblivion. As for Ryarsh, it is a pretty, wooded, sylvan sort of village, close to Malling, and some seven or eight miles from Maidstone. You would not select it as a suitable spot for a murder, and yet a peculiarly revolting crime was perpetrated there in 1876 by one James Parris.

This man belonged to a very old and much respected family hailing from Offham, a village close by, and his ancestors had acted in the capacity of parish clerk in that neighbourhood for upwards of a century. Fine, sturdy specimens of the Kentish yeomen the male Parrises had been for generations, and stalwart, buxom lasses were the female members of the same family; but James Parris was a degenerate, and his deed covered the good old name with ignominy and disgrace. It is still remembered in the district, and when I cycled over to Malling some two years ago from the county town, I was shown a curious photograph of the defunct James Parris by the local innkeeper, who seemed quite proud of the trophy.

Yes, Parris was a very brutal specimen of the genus murderer, and the utter inadequacy of the motive made the case quite one of the most sensational of the year. In the summer of '76, he lodged with his parents, and up to that time had conducted himself with propriety, though he was seen occasionally under the influence of much more malt liquor than was good for him, and had an amiable weakness for the society of ladies whose manners were about on a par with their morals. It was this little propensity of his which got him into such serious trouble.

James Parris, described as thirty-two years of age, an agricultural labourer, was tried at the Kent Summer Assizes on Wednesday, July 13th, 1876, before Baron Huddlestone, for the murder of William Crouch, a child between six and seven years old, at Ryarsh, on the previous 11th of June. The little victim was the illegitimate son of one Charlotte Crouch, and was born—not in wedlock, but in the local workhouse! I do not wish to say anything hard about Mrs. Crouch, but I am afraid that she resembled anyone rather than the goddess Diana in the matter of chastity, and she had had many lovers, and several children. On June 10th, this woman—fair, frail, and forty—discharged herself from the Malling Union, and took with her into the outer world her little boy. She repaired at once to a public-house near the workhouse, and there fell in with some men—including Parris—who treated her liberally to ale and rough compliments. It would appear that she was without a shelter for the night, and Parris made a certain suggestion to her, to which this Kentish Circe readily consented. It was arranged, to be candid, that they should pass the night together at a place which Parris would find for her, and just before ten o'clock the latter left the public-house, leading the boy, Willie Crouch, by the hand. His mother followed almost immediately, and was overheard to say, "You go on and show the way; I will follow." A few minutes after Parris was met by a man named Corke, his brother-in-law, who strongly advised him not to have anything to do with the woman or her son; but the other was looking forward to a night of pleasure, and could not be persuaded to relinquish his intention. He took the child to some stables, and then waited the appearance of his inamorata. That estimable female missed her conductor in some manner, and, according to her own statement, spent the entire night searching for Parris and her boy. She stoutly denied at the trial that she had made any such arrangement with the man as he suggested, but I am afraid that she was not adhering strictly to the truth. There is reason to believe that this rural courtesan encountered another man while looking for Parris and her child, and that she wilfully neglected to fulfil her prior engagement. However that may be, Parris went to the stables without the woman, and he and the poor little boy fell asleep—the latter to wake no more.

The man, according to his own statement, awoke at a little before three in the morning, and was enraged at the absence of the woman. Will it be credited that he determined upon wreaking his disappointment and vengeance upon the innocent child, peacefully sleeping, unconscious of danger, upon his rude couch of straw? The boy was pretty and engaging, but this devil-tempted man saw nothing of that, and only felt an absorbing desire to maim and kill. He seized a heavy piece of iron piping which lay handy, and with it battered in the child's head as he lay asleep. Of all the foul deeds that the pale moon may have beamed on that summer night, that was the worst. Of all the evil acts perpetrated that warm June night, that was the cruellest and the most cowardly. The deed done, even the murderer seems

to have been inspired with a kind of horror of himself, and loathing for his brutal act. He hurriedly left the stables and betook himself to the house of his brother-in-law, Corke, whom he aroused by loud and repeated knocks at his door. He was admitted—the child's fresh blood was on his hands—and he asked for a cup of tea.

"It's the last you'll ever make for me," he said, with a gesture of despair.

"What do you mean? What have you done?" asked the other, alarmed at his wild manner.

"I shall be hung!" said Parris solemnly, "for I have done murder. I have killed the little boy!" Corke expressed his detestation of the deed, and ordered Parris to leave his house. The murderer did so, and, proceeding to the Malling Police-station, gave himself up and informed the inspector where the body would be found To Police-constable Weeks he said, "I met the woman at Baldwin's beershop last night. She agreed to come with me if I found her a place to lie down in, and I took her boy to Mr. Durrell's upper stables, thinking she would follow, but she went off with another man instead." He described how he got up, went to look

BATTERED IN THE CHILD'S HEAD AS HE LAY ASLEEP.

for the woman, and, failing to find her, the thought came in his mind to kill the child to spite her. He added, "I was wild; never so wild in my life. This is a very bad case; I should think there never was a worse. Hanging is too good for me!"

Superintendent Hulse proceeded to Mr. Durrell's stables and found the body, the boy being quite dead and getting cold. There were four large wounds on the head, and close at hand two pieces of heavy iron "shorting," which had formerly been one piece. Blood was on the longest piece, and great force must have been used to inflict the blows. The officer, on his way back, met the child's mother, who said that she had been searching everywhere for Parris and her boy. Her grief and rage on learning what had happened cannot be described, and she invoked curses upon the head of the murderer long enough and loud enough to attract round her a crowd of villagers, though it was yet in the small hours of the morning.

At the trial the prisoner wished to plead guilty, but was overruled by the judge, who requested a Mr. Holt to undertake his defence, and that gentleman did his best to secure an acquittal on the score of insanity. He called several witnesses, including the mother, father, and sister of the accused, to testify to the eccentric conduct of their relative, who was always very strange in manner after a drinking bout. When fifteen years old Parris suffered from severe rheumatic fever, and it was suggested that since then he had been of weak mind, having on two or three occasions threatened to destroy himself. He had been heard, according to the witnesses, to complain of pains in the head, and often declared that he felt he should go mad. A distant relative of his was even at that time confined in a lunatic asylum.

In spite of these assertions, the jury immediately found James Parris guilty, and he was sentenced to death, the judge remarking that nothing could excuse so barbarous a crime, and that there were no indications in the prisoner of even partial insanity.

Parris was hanged at Maidstone, on August 1st, 1876. From the first he seemed to fully realise his awful position and paid marked attention to the ministrations of the Rev. A. H. Harrison, admitting the justice of the sentence, and that the trial was a fair one. He gave no motive for the murder. "The idea came suddenly into my head." Before the execution he was visited by several relatives, to all of whom he expressed abhorrence of his deed. The night before he slept for several hours, and rose before six o'clock, the day being a Tuesday and beautifully fine. At six-thirty the convict received the Sacrament. He was pinioned in the cell and walked with steady, measured tread to the scaffold. There appeared to be a certain amount of tediousness over the adjustment of the rope, and Marwood first tightened and then loosened it more than once before he could get the knot in its proper position. At last all was ready, and then the body of the murderer swayed from one side to the other, as though his courage was deserting him, but the bolt was immediately drawn, and he fell a distance of six feet into the pit beneath, which had been deepened since the last execution. The force of the fall caused Parris to jerk from side to side, and upon approaching the drop it was seen that the white cap had slipped up to the top of his head, leaving the face visible. Once or twice the body quivered, and then all was still. Parris, the boy murderer, was dead!

The Arran Tragedy.

How an Unsuspecting Tourist met with an Awful End on the wild and lonely slopes of Goatfell.

"List a brief tale:—
And, when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst!"
"KING LEAR."

WHEN John Watson Laurie was led into the High Court of Justiciary, at Edinburgh, on Friday, November 8, 1889, there was a dead silence. Few people expected to see such a smart, dapper young fellow in the man accused of such a heinous crime as the murder of a human being. As he stood there, with a policeman on either hand, he presented the appearance of a rather good-looking chap, of fair complexion, medium height, and somewhat slim build. He wore a moustache and slight whisker, and was faultlessly attired in a fawn-coloured Melton overcoat. His look was nervous and troubled, but scarcely so much so as one would have imagined in a man about to undergo his trial on a capital charge. When asked by the Bench if he still adhered to the plea of "Not guilty," he replied, in a rather weak and indistinct voice, "Yes, sir—yes, my lord."

Outside the court was a huge crowd, that had besieged the doors for hours before ten, which was the time announced for the commencement of the trial. This was what had been anticipated, and stringent measures had been made by the authorities regarding admission. When the news circulated that Laurie actually at last stood before his judge the excitement was intense, and every scrap of information was eagerly sought after. The public interest in the crime, because of the romantic surroundings of the scene of the murder, had never abated during the months that had elapsed from July to November.

A somewhat curious incident happened during the empanelling of the jury. One of the persons selected told the judge (Lord Kingsburgh, the Lord Justice Clerk) that he had a conscientious objection to serve, but was informed by his lordship that the objection urged was hardly sufficient, and that the responsibility lay, not with him, but with those who administered the law. The trial then proceeded, and the indictment was read.

It ran in the Scottish legal phraseology as follows: "John Watson Laurie, you are indicted of the Rt. Hon. J. P. B. Robertson, her Majesty's Advocate; and the charge against you is that, on 15th July, 1889, at Corr-na-fourin, near the head of Glen Sannox, in the island of Arran, Buteshire, you did assault Edwin Robert Rose, Wissit Lodge, Hendham Road, Upper Tooting, London, and did throw him down, and did beat him, and did murder him."

The prosecuting counsel in the case were the Solicitor-General for Scotland (M. T. Stormouth Darling, Q.C., M.P.) and Messrs. Dugald McKechnie and Graham Murray; while for the defence were the Dean of Faculty (J. B. Balfour, Q.C., M.P.) and C. S. Dickson.

The story of the murder, as revealed at the trial, is a peculiarly horrible one, because of the terrible injuries sustained by the victim.

Edwin Robert Rose was clerk to a Brixton builder, who gave him a high character for integrity and honesty. He was 32 years of age, about 5ft. 7in. in height, and slightly built. He enjoyed fairly good health, was of active habits, and, though not an athlete, was a decent lawn-tennis player and cricketer. He was a young man of cheerful and agreeable disposition, on the best of terms with his family, and every year was in the habit, like most persons of his age and circumstances, of taking a holiday to some place out of London. In the beginning of July, 1889, he started on a trip to Scotland in his usual health and spirits.

There was at that time staying at the Glenburn Hydropathic establishment, Rothesay, in the island of Bute, a son of Rose's employer, the Rev. Gustavus Goodman, minister of the Presbyterian Church, Walker-on-Tyne. This clergyman was an old friend of the deceased young fellow, and it was his being at the hydropathic which induced Rose to go to Scotland. When the latter reached Rothesay he put up at Glenburn, and he and Mr. Goodman saw a good deal of each other. He mentioned to his friend that he would like to go to Arran, and Mr. Goodman saw him on his way to the "Ivanhoe," the steamer sailing for Brodick, the principal town on the island. It was the last time that gentleman ever spoke with Rose.

Among the other guests at the hydropathic was one who called himself Annandale, a silent and uncommunicative young man of about five-and-twenty. Rose and he struck up an acquaintance, and found another chum in Francis Ord Mickel, a wood merchant, of Linlithgow. Annandale was, in reality, John Watson Laurie, a pattern-maker, of Springburn, Glasgow, earning an average wage of £2 per week, but posing at the hydropathic as a young man of means. It was arranged among themselves that Rose, Mickel, and Annandale should make the trip to Arran in each

other's company, along with about twenty of the hydropathic guests, and they all set out in the best of spirits on board the "Ivanhoe." This was on Saturday, the 13th of July. When they arrived at Brodick, Rose and Annandale took lodgings together. At that time they had each a bag. On Monday, 15th, Mickel saw Rose breakfasting at Mrs. Wooley's

refreshment-rooms. The latter told him that he and Annandale proposed climbing Goatfell, the celebrated peak of Arran. Before they started Mickel had a row with Rose and Annandale in the bay. He had told Rose he did not like Annandale appearing and disappearing so often, and advised Rose to separate from him. Before then he had spoken to Rose in the same strain, having early formed an unfavourable impression of Annandale. The man's manner did not please him, it seemed so quiet and secretive. He had tried to find out where Annandale came from, but could get no satisfactory answer. In consequence of what Mickel said to him, Rose promised to give up Annandale's acquaintance, and he (Mickel) was firmly persuaded that such was the young man's intention the last time he saw him on the pier at Brodick, wearing a tweed suit and cap to match, and a pair of small leggings. He had also a waterproof over his arm, and a stick in his hand. A commercial traveller, named William Thom, was with Mickel at Glenburn in July, when Rose and Laurie, under the name of Annandale, were there. Thom also accompanied the pair to Arran, where, on the Monday, they had a walk before Mickel and Thom left the island by the "Ivanhoe." On the previous day Rose had spoken to Thom of the prospective ascent of Goat-

Passed a man carrying two bags.

fell with Annandale. On Friday, the 12th, at the request of Rose, while they were all at Glenburn, he (Thom) had shown Annandale over the hydropathic. Annandale allowed Rose to share his room, and in Brodick they all had refreshments at Mrs. Wooley's shop, and tea with the Gilmours, a Linlithgow doctor's family, at that time spending a holiday in Arran. This showed they were on friendly terms, and that Annandale, as he called himself, was one of the little party.

Laurie, who had cards printed with his alias, took a room at a Mrs. Walker's, giving her one of his false cards. This was on Friday, the 12th July, and on Saturday, the 13th, he returned between one and two, accompanied by Rose, as if they had just arrived in Brodick and had come off the boat. On the Monday night Mrs. Walker and her husband went to bed early, without knowing whether her lodgers had come in or not. Next morning she went to their bedroom, but found it vacant, and their luggage gone. Several articles, however, were left, and these she gave to the police. Neither of the young men came back, and the bill was not paid. Annandale had agreed to pay 17s. for the rent of the room for a week, and 3s. shillings more on bringing Rose.

The Mrs. Wooley, already mentioned, kept a tea-room in Brodick, and Rose had his meals there. Being of a chatty and communicative nature, he confided to her that he was lodging near with a Mr. Annandale, and that they were both to ascend Goatfell next day. When she first saw Rose on Saturday he was wearing a cap, but he donned a felt hat on the Sabbath.

While the couple were staying at Mrs. Walker's, a brother of that lady paid her a visit from Glasgow, and in her house saw three lodgers. Rose in particular caught his attention, and he learnt he was in the company of Annandale. On the Monday this Mr. Morrison ascended Goatfell with his brother-in-law, a Mr. Purdon, and as they were coming down they met Rose and Annandale going up. Like all the other witnesses at the trial, this gentleman recognised the prisoner Laurie as the tourist Annandale. He met a good many people going up, he said, but Rose and Annandale were the only ones he knew.

Mr. Purdon also recognised the prisoner as Annandale, and observed, too, that Rose was wearing a chain. Another gentleman who saw them on the mountain was the Rev. Robert Hind, minister of the Primitive Methodist Church, Paisley. He gave evidence that he was accompanied by Mr. John McCabe, schoolmaster, Hamilton, and the Rev. Joseph Ritson. They left Brodick about three o'clock and took the ordinary road. About four they were overtaken by two young men on the open hill. The prisoner was extremely like one of them, but the other was much more slenderly built, and told him that he came from London. He saw them again on the top of the mountain, at the farther edge of the summit, but that was the last glimpse he had of them, and he descended the way he went up. He mentioned to his friends that he wondered what had become of them, and Mr. McCabe said if they had gone back by Glen Sannox they had taken a fearful track. The friends also bore testimony to seeing the two upon the mountain, and the Rev. Mr. Ritson recognised a photograph of Rose.

There were others as well who saw them, and David McKenzie, a shepherd of Corrie, noticed a man coming out of Glen Sannox, and remarked to two girls that the man was tired and worn-out-like. That man he identified as Laurie.

James Wilson, of Greenock, was at a picnic on Goatfell on 15th July, and, going to Corrie Hotel for refreshment, saw the prisoner in the bar, and had some beer with him. Laurie said he had had a long walk, and intended to go to Brodick that night. Maggie Williamson, the barmaid of the Corrie Hotel, corroborated Wilson, and added that the man who stood beside him in the bar remained behind, and asked for some spirits, giving as a reason for buying the whiskey that he had to walk to Brodick that night. It was then a few minutes after ten o'clock on the fatal 15th of July.

The meshes had now begun to draw in around Laurie. He had been seen on the mountain of Goatfell by many persons in company with his victim during the afternoon. He was now alone upon his return late in the evening. Miss Williamson, the barmaid, seemed to have been the last person to have seen him that night. They are early folk in Arran, and there would not be many stirring abroad after ten, so Laurie must have crept quietly to his lodgings, and at an early hour of the morning stolen away with his own and Rose's effects.

Again we get a passing glance at him with Rose's bag as well as his own in his possession. Mary Robertson, of Kilmarnock, went to Brodick on the morning of the 16th of July, the day after the murder, and on the road passed a man carrying two bags. That man was the prisoner.

We now come to the evidence of a fellow-traveller, who sailed with him on the same steamer and rode in the same train on his flight from Arran after the dreadful deed had been perpetrated. Young Mr. A. A. F. C. Gilmour was a student of medicine, and hailed from Linlithgow. He was staying for a summer holiday in Arran, along with his father and other friends. On the 12th of July he encountered at Brodick his fellow-townsmen, Messrs. Mickel and Thom. They introduced him to two other gentlemen, Messrs. Rose and Annandale. The former was remarkably talkative and jolly, the latter very quiet and reserved. On Tuesday morning he left Brodick for Ardrossan, on the "Scotia." Going on board, he saw Annandale, recognised him, and spoke to him. He told him he was going to Glasgow, and at Ardrossan he observed that Annandale had luggage with him. They got into the same compartment, and there he saw the man with a black leather bag. They parted at St. Enoch's Station, Glasgow.

This is the very last we see of Annandale. He disappears completely, and in his place we have John Watson Laurie in propriâ personâ. The villain has played his part on the stage of real life, and now returns to his true character.

Mrs. Ellen King was the prisoner's Glasgow landlady, and knew him as John Laurie. He took lodgings with her in the previous June, and told her he worked at Springburn,

where he was a "superior engineer," whatever that might mean. When he left in July she was away from home, but on August 3rd she received a letter from him which ran thus:

"Dear Madam,—I beg to enclose P.O. for my rent, as I cannot call, as I have to go to Leith. There are some people trying to get me into trouble, and I think you should give them no information at all, and I will prove to them how they are mistaken before very long.—Yours respectfully, "JOHN LAURIE."

Mrs. King received that letter on the 3rd of August, and on seeing certain statements in the newspapers, she eventually handed it over to the police, with all the belongings Laurie had left behind him at her house. Among the articles was a trunk.

It was somewhat difficult to trace Laurie's movements in Glasgow at this time. He shared a room with a Mathew Eaglesome, but left for good somewhat suddenly while his fellow-lodger was absent. He had said, however, that he had got a situation in Leith, and told Eaglesome that he had been to Arran.

We at last arrive at a perilous point for Laurie, when a man suspects him. John Gillon Aitken was an individual who knew Laurie. In July he went to Rothesay for a holiday, that being one of the favourite watering-places on the Clyde. He met Laurie there, and was on board the "Ivanhoe," on 12th July, when Rose was there with the accused. Laurie told him that he had met a stranger on board the boat who had taken him for a person he had casually encountered at the hydropathic. The prisoner pointed out the stranger, and said his name was Rose. He saw Laurie talk to Rose on board. Afterwards he (Mr. Aitken) went on to Whiting Bay, and returned, seeing Laurie again at Brodick. The latter informed him that he had found lodgings, and that Rose would be with him next day (Saturday). On that day Mr. Aitken saw them again upon the pier, and left them there waiting for the Arran boat. The next time this gentleman saw Laurie he was wearing a hat very like the one worn by Rose on the boat. Mr. Aitken asked him how he and his friend had got on at Brodick. "Oh, very well indeed," replied Laurie, and added that he was going back to Glasgow, as his holidays were done. When the two afterwards met in the Scottish city, Mr. Aitken spoke to Laurie. He had read a report of the disappearance of Mr. Rose, and wanted to know what Laurie knew about it. The fellow hesitated, and Mr. Aitken asked him if it were not the same gentleman who had accompanied him to Brodick. He said it was the same name, but it could not be the same Mr. Rose, as that person had returned with him. "You had better go and do your duty, and tell the authorities that," rejoined Mr. Aitken.

"Do you think so?" inquired Laurie.

"If you will not do so," said the other, "I shall have to do it myself."

Mr. Aitken further informed him that he would go to the authorities and mention his (Laurie's) name as one who knew something of the whereabouts of Mr. Rose, and strongly advised him to go also.

"What cap was that you were wearing on Friday night?" asked the gentleman suddenly.

Laurie stared aghast.

"Surely you don't think me a——" he replied, and stopped there.

Mr. Aitken asked him to go to the police office with him, but the startled scoundrel said he would prefer not to go; nevertheless, he promised to meet this acquaintance of his again, and let him know further. He made an appointment for six that evening at Mr. Aitken's office, but he never kept it. "While speaking, Laurie got a little pale," said Mr. Aitken, "and declared, 'I am quite innocent of everything.'" A few days after, the gentleman saw an account of the finding of the body, and thought it his duty to tell what he knew. He had been acquainted with the prisoner as Laurie, and had introduced him to persons on board the "Ivanhoe" by that name. It was on the 31st of July he twitted Laurie about the cap.

"Did you intend to convey that you suspected him?" inquired the Dean of Faculty in cross-examination.

"I could not do otherwise," was the distinct reply.

"Was it then he said, 'Surely you don't think I'm a——,' and spoke about being innocent?" asked the Dean.

"It was," answered Mr. Aitken solemnly.

Doubtless it was the suspicion in Mr. Aitken's mind, and his subsequent communication to the police, that first set the authorities on the right track.

It has been already pointed out that Laurie was only a pattern-maker, whose wages, with good overtime, only amounted to an average of £2 per week. His foreman at Springburn was called to prove this, and he also stated that Laurie had told him on the 31st he was going to Leith to travel for grain.

Having traced this callous-hearted wretch from the date of his meeting with his victim to the time when the sleuth-hounds of the law were directed to his trail, it now devolves upon us to return to the Mountain of the Winds, as Goatfell is termed in the picturesque language of the ancient Celt.

When young Mr. Rose did not return to his London home, where he resided with his father, a brother, and four sisters, on the 18th of July, 1889, as he had promised, the family naturally became alarmed, and communicated with an elder brother, living close by, at Balham. This was on Saturday, the 20th, and the brother at once attempted to telegraph, but found it was too late that night. There was no help but to wait till Monday morning. A couple of wires were then despatched, one to the Post Office, Brodick, and the other to the Rev. Mr. Goodman, staying at the Glenburn Hydropathic, Rothesay. The replies not being satisfactory, Mr. Benjamin Rose set out on the 26th for Brodick, arriving there on the following day (Saturday). In the meantime, he had communicated with the Chief Constable of Buteshire, Mr. Mackay, and on the Sunday a search-party was organised, but Goatfell was shrouded in a mountain mist, and little could be done. All that week Mr. Benjamin Rose was indefatigable in his efforts to discover the remains of his missing brother, for by this time all hope of finding him alive had been abandoned. A continuous search was kept up in the glens, corries, and watercourses of the Mountain of the Winds.

On Sunday, August 4th, the search-party was organised on a more gigantic scale than before, and numbered about two hundred of all sorts and conditions of men, policemen, gamekeepers, shepherds, fishermen, tourists, villagers. About one hundred and fifty went from Brodick, and fifty from the village of Corrie. The party was divided into two sections, the larger body taking the more open route to the summit of the mountain, and the smaller going by way of Glen Sannox.

It was one of the latter band who actually found the body, a fisherman named Francis Logan. His attention was drawn to the spot by a number of stones being built up in the form of a low wall—called in Scotland a dry-stone dyke—masking a cavity under a huge boulder. He went closer, and peered through a crevice. The first thing his eyes lit upon was a man's arm, and he shouted with all his might. His cry brought other searchers to the spot, prominent among them being Police-Sergeant Munro. When the stones and some turf were removed, he gave orders that the body should not be touched until a doctor arrived to examine it.

Dr. Gilmour, a practitioner of thirty years' standing in Linlithgow, a summer visitor to Arran, was soon upon the scene, and after him came Dr. Neil Fullarton, of Lamlash. The corpse presented a horribly gruesome aspect when moved. The left side of the face was totally denuded of flesh, the result of decomposition. The eyes were gone, and nothing left but a grinning death's head. The left side was bare from the central medium line to the hairy portion of the scalp, and there was a large, ragged cavity, with pieces of bone sticking out. Dr. Gilmour counted nine pieces of detached bone, most of which were lying inside the skull. There were no injuries on the body as distinguished from the head. He examined the spine and legs, and on the latter found a hole through the trousers and flesh, which he thought was caused by rats. When he first saw the body, the uppermost joint of the backbone was lying loose. Decay had set in, and destroyed the ligaments. When he turned the body round, the attachments, which must have been very slight, gave way. He could not see any injury to the neck by violence. He and Dr. Fullarton made a joint report, which stated that "From examination of the body, and nature of the injuries, we are of opinion that death was caused by repeated blows on the left side of the head, and that those blows were caused by some heavy, blunt instrument." The body had the appearance of having had a blow, struck downwards. There was an injury to the shoulder which might have been caused by a fall, but it was Dr. Gilmour's opinion it was the result of a blow. There must have been repeated impacts, either by blows or falls. One blow could not have caused the injuries; but there was a possibility that had deceased fallen perpendicularly from a high cliff, the injuries might have been so caused. If there had been a fall, or a succession of falls, he would have expected abdominal injuries, but such was not the case.

In his cross-examination by the Dean of Faculty, Dr. Gilmour admitted that he had no experience of a human being falling thirty-two or nineteen feet, the height of adjoining cliffs, upon hard stone. It depended on the nature of the resistance whether a body falling nineteen or thirty-two feet, and alighting on the head would be reduced to a bag of bones. If a body pitched down a height and alighted on stone, the head would suffer first, and then the next protuberance. The doctor admitted that the injury to the shoulder was just such as might be expected from a fall, but could give no opinion as to ribs. He formed the opinion on the ground that the injuries were inflicted by direct blows. He took no pains to ascertain whether there had been any bleeding. He had known a man live for a week after a fracture at the base of the skull who did not lose an ounce of blood. In answer to the judge, Dr. Gilmour said five or six blows on the head would produce little or no bleeding.

Dr. Neil Fullarton, Lamlash, Arran, supported Dr. Gilmour in every particular. He knew the part of the mountain well where the body was found. The nature of the ground above that spot was of granite substance, with here and there patches of turf. There was a sheer fall of ten feet at the spot where the cap was found. Answering the Dean of Faculty, he said that down to where the cap and waterproof were discovered the general declivity would be about five degrees. On the left side of the watercourse were no slippery ledges, but on the right there were. The fracture in the skull Dr. Fullarton stated was a continuous one from below the left ear, round to the back, and over the crown to the right temple. There was also a cross fracture behind the left ear, which he believed was done after death. He believed the injuries were caused by repeated blows from a blunt instrument by reason of their nature and extent, and no amount of cross-examination could shake him from that belief.

Dr. Littlejohn, the celebrated Edinburgh expert, who examined the body of Rose after exhumation on September 27, stated in his report to the Crown that the brain was totally destroyed, and the throat likewise. There was no trace of heart; but it was otherwise with the abdomen, which presented a remarkably fresh appearance, free from bruises. The condition of the cranium, as he saw it in the coffin, at once suggested a series of direct blows as the cause of death. A fall would not have produced such localised injuries to the head and face without causing injuries to the extremities and abdomen. In cases of a fall the liver was usually ruptured, and there were effusions of blood on the abdominal walls. In this case all the abdominal organs were entire and uninjured, and he explained the decomposition of the heart and lungs by the injuries having been administered to the head. What occurred to Dr. Littlejohn as the most important feature connected with the injuries was the dislodgment of the upper jaw. He had seen many severe fractures of the skull, but never anything like this, because the connections with that bone were the firmest and strongest in the body. He was struck, too, by the absence of injury to the spine, and he did not think the same fall could have inflicted the injury to the head and the shoulder. It would have required a series of falls upon the head, and from a considerable height. If a blunt article, like a stone, were used, there would not be bleeding, because the blood-vessels would be bruised, and that would stop the flow. The cross-examination of Dr. Littlejohn was very short, and his opinion was unshaken, The injury to the upper part of the cranium was quite consistent with a fall; but he had never met a case in which the bones of the face were so severely battered from such a cause.

FRANCIS LOGAN FINDS THE BODY.

Then came the evidence of two women, Jane Vannam, a Glasgow broker, who bought Laurie's tools for twenty-five shillings, on July 31, when he was about to fly; and the landlady of the house in Liverpool where the fugitive took lodgings and left the box, which was afterwards given up to the police.

The hue and cry for Laurie being now out, that miserable creature fled hither and thither like a hunted rat, while the police were ever hot upon the scent. There was no rest given to the wretched fugitive, and it may well be supposed that, along with the keen officers of the law, there was another and more terrible figure pursuing him wherever he went—the dread shadow of his victim, with its crushed and battered skull, its sightless eyes, and horribly disfigured face. When at last he discovered that flight was hopeless, he crawled, weary and despairing, into a plantation near Hamilton, and tried to put an end to his own crime-stained life. But he had not the pluck for that even. The attempt was but a feeble one, and as he lay groaning beneath a thorn-bush, Constable Gordon rushed in and captured him. "You are Laurie?" said the policeman. "Yes, I am Laurie," he replied; "but not Laurie the murderer." "Come, John, it is all past now," said Gordon. "Yes, it is," he

answered. "I have cut my throat." "I don't suppose it's a deadly wound," remarked the burly officer. And, as it turned out, he was not far wrong. Laurie's nerve had failed him, and the cut was far from fatal.

The line of defence adopted by his counsel at the trial, as may be gathered from the foregoing account, was ingenious, and undoubtedly saved him from the gallows he so richly deserved. It was sought to be proved that poor young Rose's death was accidental, and caused by a fall either from the thirty-two or the nineteen-foot rock; but that theory was scarcely compatible with Laurie's after conduct. Even if he were so overcome by fear of consequences to himself that in his unreasoning terror he concealed the body and fled, robbery would not be likely to suggest itself to him. With all due deference to such an eminent surgical authority as Dr. Patrick Heron Watson, who was called in support of the fall theory, we can scarcely see how that can be tenable. And even now, so many years after the event, it may not be out of place to suggest a theory of our own which would prove the doctors on both sides to be correct. What if Laurie deliberately pushed the young Englishman over the height, and afterwards, finding that the broken and dislocated shoulder was all the injury he had received, had set about him and battered his head in? We take it that such a suggestion is not altogether devoid of belief, and it would clear up a somewhat doubtful point in the case. At all events, it may be taken for what it is worth, and as a mere attempt to reconcile the differences of the doctors, we offer it to the public.

That Laurie robbed Rose there is no denying. He was a mean and paltry thief, sneaking off with a dead man's property, and that he murdered him first there are few who have any doubt.

To the remarkably able manner in which the case for the accused was conducted all praise is due. Mr. J. B. Balfour, since Lord Justice General, left no stone unturned to secure his client's acquittal on the capital charge, and to his strong exertions may be attributed the commutation of the death sentence passed on Laurie by Lord Kingsburgh, whose summing up was characterised by extraordinary judicial acumen.

The jury retired at twenty minutes to nine, and returned at forty-three minutes past with a verdict of "Guilty" by a majority, and the prisoner was sentenced to death in the usual manner. This sentence was afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life, which means in reality for twenty years. The culprit is now serving his time on the new breakwater at Peterhead, and in another six years or so, if he live as long, will be a free man.

YES OR NO?
ONE PENNY WEEKLY

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Joseph Walters's Vengeance.

HOW HE STROVE TO KILL HIS HYPOCRITICAL MISTRESS.

"Thus I clothe my naked villainy
With odd, old ends stol'n forth of holy writ."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King Richard III.," Act I., sc. 3.

MRS. KILSBY was a dealer in second-hand furniture, and lived at Old Brentford. She was rather a jealous woman, and possessed of a very bad temper, so much so that when Mr. Kilsby was carried to the churchyard folks said that he had found peace at last. She had one son, who lived with her and assisted in the business, and the rougher work of the shop and warehouse was done by a young man named Joseph Walters, a youth of about seventeen years of age.

Poor Walters's life was anything but a happy one, his mistress venting her temper on him in place of the late Kilsby, and generally treating the wretched shopman as if he were an animal. Things went from bad to worse, Mrs. Kilsby growing more violent and abusive every day, and Walters detesting the sight of his mistress more and more.

When Joseph Walters had been about nine months in the employ of the Kilsbys he was out in the stable one afternoon—12th April, 1838, to be precise—seeing to the mare and tidying up the place generally, when Mrs. Kilsby suddenly came out of the shop.

"You d——d scoundrel!" was her pleasant greeting. "What are you doing there?"

"Littering down the mare, mum," replied Walters.

"You liar! You were doing something else, and deserve to be hanged! I'll tell Mr. Kilsby when he comes home, and he'll fetch a policeman."

"I was not doing anything but what I said!" retorted the shopman, but Mrs. Kilsby, who was a thoroughly bad woman, insisted that the youth had been misconducting himself and swore that she would do her best to get him hanged. "That's all you're good for, you lazy brute!" she concluded, and flounced off to the kitchen.

Walters was alarmed. He knew he was innocent, but he also felt sure that in a court of law the word of the woman, who cloaked her villainy under the guise of great piety, and was a leading light in the local Little Bethel, would be taken before his. He loathed her with all his heart, and vowed that it would be better to be hanged for her sake than to be hanged an innocent man. All that afternoon he brooded over the injury which had been done him, and at last decided that he would not wait to be accused by the shrew, but would settle her first. This was the mood he was in when he was called into the shop parlour to have his tea. Mrs. Walters handed him a cup of tea, calling him a beast at the same time, and promising that his next meal should be in gaol, and then put some sugar at the bottom of her own cup, preparatory to pouring out her tea. Just at that moment she was called into the shop to attend to a customer.

Twenty minutes later she returned. Walters had obviously finished his meal and gone out to the workshops. Her cup was still on the table, and she filled it up with tea and took a mouthful. In an instant she spat out what she had tasted, for her mouth felt as if on fire, and the skin already began to peel off in flakes. Hurriedly she rinsed her mouth with water, and then went out to the workshop and accused Walters of putting poison in the tea. The man denied it, saying that he had not been in the parlour since his mistress had left to serve the customer. Mrs. Kilsby, however, was positive that only the man could have tampered with the tea, and called a constable, to whom she gave the remainder of the tea in her cup, telling him to take it to a chemist to have it analysed. This was soon done, and the policeman returned, saying that a quantity of nitric acid had been found in the cup.

That reminded Mrs. Kilsby that in the sideboard was a bottle of nitric acid which she used to make cheap furniture look antique, and she at once went to the cupboard and took out the bottle. It was empty, though it had been filled on the previous day. The shopman was sent for and told by the constable what had been found, and he made no reply.

Mrs. Kilsby refused to charge him then, fearing that her threat of the afternoon might be brought up and proved to be false, so she allowed the policeman to go away. At midnight, however, her son returned from a sale which he had been attending, and she related the whole circumstances to him. He was afraid that if Walters was not charged with attempted murder his next essay might be successful, so he went up to the youth's room and bade him get up. Walters did so, and when he came downstairs he found two policemen in the parlour, into whose custody he was given, and charged with attempting to poison his mistress.

On the 21st of May he was indicted at the Old Bailey, before the Recorder. The principal witness was Mrs. Kilsby, and under cross-examination she was forced to admit that the charge of immorality which she had made against the prisoner on the afternoon of the 12th of April was absolutely false. As good fortune would have it, the elders of her conventicle were in court to hear her confession. The analyst who examined the cup said that it contained six drachms of nitric acid. Walters made no defence beyond saying that his mistress had made life so wretched

"That's all you're good for, you lazy brute!"

for him that he had intended to kill himself. He was found guilty and sentenced to die, but such sympathy was felt for him that the capital sentence was commuted to one of transportation. The Kilsbys' business was ruined.

Saved by a Wen.

Some eighty years ago, in or about the year 1822, a man was sentenced to death at the Old Bailey, and on being taken back to await execution it was found that, owing to his having a wen upon his throat weighing over thirty pounds, it would be impossible to hang him without circumstances of such revolting cruelty as would have provoked a general outcry of indignation. The matter quickly found its way from the legal to the medical faculty, and the latter took steps to obtain the man's pardon. The wen was successfully removed by the eminent surgeon, John Hunter, who afterwards took the man into his service, where he often had to show his own wen to visitors to his employer's museum.

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DAINTY NOVELS
ONE PENNY WEEKLY.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

A Hanging Judge's Escape.

In the reign of James I. a certain Sir Miles Fleetwood was noted for being very severe on highwaymen, and it was said that he hanged every one of that fraternity that was brought before him. At last, a brotherhood of the "knights of the road" determined to make an example of the judge, so they lay in wait for him one day, not far from Tyburn, as he was on his way to his house in Buckinghamshire. They had a halter in readiness, brought him under the gallows, tied his hands behind him, and then left him to the mercy of his horse, which he called Ball. Fortunately, the good old horse stood perfectly still, instead of running away or making an attempt to travel home, and, help coming, Sir Miles was released from his position of peril. Out of gratitude to Ball he kept the horse as long as he lived, but he was more severe than ever, if possible, on the highwaymen.

One Against the Lawyer.

About the year 1790 a man was prosecuted for an indecent assault on a female, and the father of the prosecutrix, after being examined as a witness, was cross-examined something after this fashion: "Pray, sir, is this young lady your daughter?" "She is." "Pray, how do you know she is your daughter?" The witness drew himself up indignantly, looked at the jury, and said, "Gentlemen, you hear that question? I will only say that I came forward to punish this offender at my own expense, while the man who has asked me this is bribed to prevent the course of justice. I will prove it. Look at his brief; he there acknowledges he has got ten guineas to defend a villain. Will you believe the oath of a man who is not purchased in preference to the gratuitous assertion of that man who is publicly bribed, or will you not? That is the question."

The novelty of the situation took everybody by surprise, and though the learned lawyer worked hard to clear his client, he was found guilty.

A Punning Witness.

A witness in an American court of law was once examined as follows: "Do you know the prisoner well?" "Never knew him sick." "No levity, sir. Now, sir, did you ever see the prisoner at the bar?" "Took many a drink with him at the bar." "Answer my question, sir. How long have you known the prisoner?" "From two feet up to five feet ten inches." "I must appeal to the court to——" "I have, jedge, answered the question; I knowed the prisoner when he was a boy two feet long and a man five feet——" "Really, your honour must interpose!" "It's a fact, jedge; I'm under oath." "Will you tell the court what you know about this case?" "That ain't his name." "What isn't his name?" "Case." "Who said it was?" "You said it. You wanted to know what I knew about this case, and I say his name is Smith." "Really, I must appeal to your honour to make this man answer." The judge (to witness): "Witness, you must answer the questions put to you." "Land o' Goshen, jedge, hain't I bin doin' it? Let the blamed cuss fire away; I'm ready." "Now, then, witness, don't beat about the bush any more. You and this prisoner have been friends?" "Never." "What, weren't you summoned here as a friend?" "No, sir; I was summoned here as a Presbyterian. Nary one of us ever was Friends; he's an ole line Baptist, without a drop o' Quaker in him." "Stand down, sir." "Can't do it, sir. I'll sit down or stand up, but——" The witness was removed from court, exclaiming, "Well, if he ain't the thickheadest cuss I've ever laid eyes on!"

Replies to Queries

Anon.—(1) The Molly Maguire murderers were eleven in number, and were executed on June 21, 1877. (2) It took place in America.

L.M.S.—It was for the murder of a policeman that the three Fenians, Allen, Gould and Larkin, were executed at Salford, November 23, 1867.

F. Sylvester (Liverpool).—We are unable to trace the crime you mention, although we have records of nearly everything. Supply further particulars.

P. Wilson.—Very many murderers have been atheists in the sense that they have, at the last, professed an absolute disbelief in the efficacy of religious consolation.

X.Y.Z.—No, you are quite mistaken. As a matter of fact only fifty executions have been carried out at Newgate during the last quarter of a century, an average of merely two a year.

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